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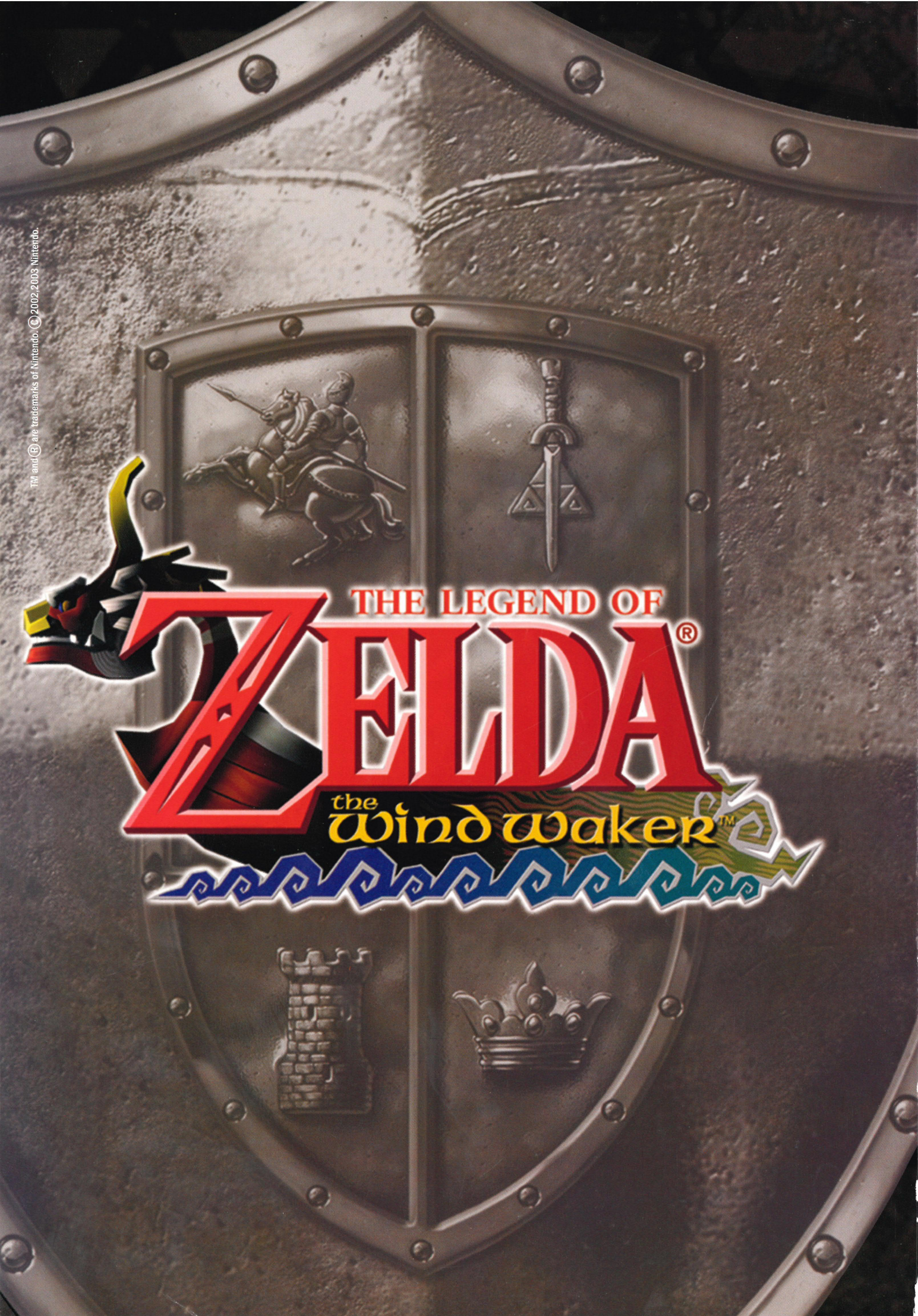

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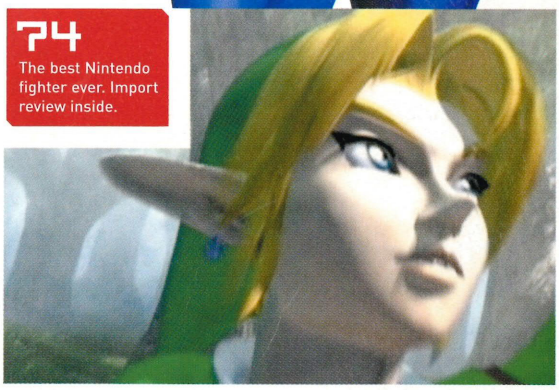
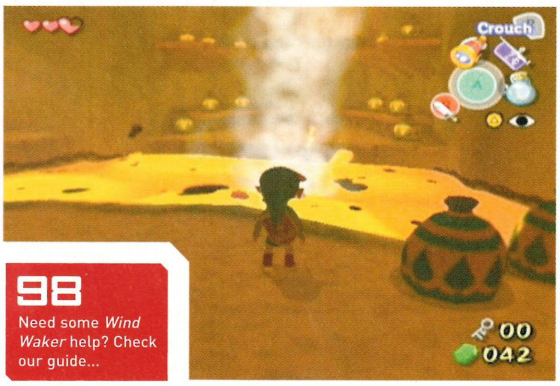
contents

26
Glue your eyes down, we're going 0-2,000km/h now!

40
He's no ordinary Joe, Viewtiful's here in Capcom's fighter.

74
The best Nintendo fighter ever. Import review inside.





98
Need some *Wind Waker* help? Check our guide...

130
It's coming to GBA – remember the Super NES classic?

Issue 129 / June 2003

YOUR PAGES

84
Letters
Another round of your words of wisdom, but who has won the HMV booty?

88
High Scores
Dave Every's been all over the scores once again, but can you topple him from his perch?

96
Q&A UK
Metroid Prime, *Star Fox Adventures*, *Tony 3* and *A Link To The Past* get the *NOM* dust down.

08 Mario Kart Double Dash

You won't find these shots in any other mag, we promise. Check 'em out and then go nuts – just like we did!

126 NOM Subscriptions

Save money on *NOM* and you'll never have to go to the shops again. Put like that, who could resist?

119 TNT Buyer's Guide

You'll find every price, every game and every score in our helpful GameCube guide. Don't go shopping without it.

86 WIN 2K OF DJ GEAR!

ALSO REVIEWED

50 Def Jam Vendetta
The best wrestling game on GameCube and there's not a whiff of the WWE. Yes, you did read that right.

54 Burnout 2: Point of Impact
The best just got better as *Burnout 2* screams home.

56 Splinter Cell
The game the word stealth was invented for is every bit as good as you'd expect.

66 ISS 3
It ain't no *Winning Eleven 6*, or *FIFA 2003* for that matter. We'll tell you why...

76 Wario Ware, Inc.
The quickest games you've ever played and they're all on one cart.

PLANET NINTENDO

9 Rogue Squadron III
Speeder bikes, the Death Star, AT-ATs – love it!

10 StarFox 2
World-furst shots of Fox and Co's next outing – exclusive.

10 Metal Gear Solid
The Twin Snakes. Remember the name. It's coming soon.

TIPS & GUIDES

92 Official Tips
We've been playing *Zelda*, *Metroid*, *Melee* and more.

108 Metroid Prime
Forget the easy stuff, we've blasted away the rock hard moments and printed them.

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PEOPLE

WHO DOES WHAT
Editor.....Tim Street
Deputy Editor.....Dean Scott
Production Editor.....Kingsley Singleton
Staff Writer.....Dominic Wint
Staff Writer.....Michael Jackson
Art Editor.....Mark Sommer
Deputy Art Editor.....Dan Payne

Many thanks to: James Honeywell, Claire Stocks-Wilson, Shelly Friend, Sam Brace, Manab Roy, Faye O'Donohue, Simon Callaghan, Darren Fox, Maura Sutton, everyone at Cake, Jodie van Hibb and Shaun White.

Printed by: St. Ives, Andover

Publisher.....Andy McVittie
Advertising Director.....Julie Dupree
Tel: 01778 561761
E-mail: julie@dupreecreative.com
Marketing Manager.....Stuart Bell
Tel: 01733 288090
Promotions Executive.....Kate Chapman
Tel: 01733 465661
Editorial Enquiries.....**Tel: 01733 237111**
Ad Production.....**Tel: 01733 288063**

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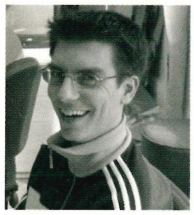
Meet the team

MEET THE PEOPLE WHO MAKE *NOM* SO DAMN AMAZING EVERY SINGLE MONTH OF THE YEAR...



Forgotten what time of day it is? Can't remember when you last ate? Well you've probably been playing *Zelda* then. If, like us, you've been lapping it up morning, noon and night despite your girlfriend/boyfriend/parents getting in a nark, you'll know that Link's adventure is the stuff of legend and quite rightly the best damn game on GameCube.

But Nintendo's awesome games line-up of 2003 doesn't end when you defeat... er, sorry, finish *Zelda*, we mean, because we've got the first ever playtest of *F-Zero GC* – the fastest-ever Nintendo racer and one of this year's jewels in the GameCube crown.

Not only that, but we've got world-exclusive shots of the game you've all been waiting for, the newly-named *Mario Kart Double Dash* on p8. We've also bagged the first ever shots of *StarFox 2*, *Rogue Squadron III*, *FIFA 2004* and more juicy details of *Pikmin 2* and *Kirby's Air Ride*.

This month is certainly bursting with all the best games you'll be playing over the next year but just before you check out all the new info, listen to this: next issue we've got an awesome *Zelda* treat for all you fans of the games, so turn to p128 now to see what we're going nuts over...

Tim Street

Tim Street, Editor

DEAN SCOTT, DEPUTY EDITOR

The coolest thing I've seen in games this month is...

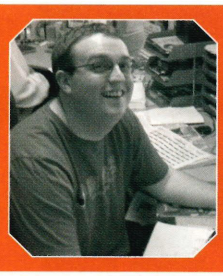
■ Winning my *FIFA* league. After leading all season, Arsenal bottled it as United went on a goal spree. The Reds hammered Charlton and the Arse got played off the park by Leeds. Or was that real life? Hmm...

KINGSLEY SINGLETON, PRODUCTION EDITOR

The coolest thing I've seen in games this month is...

■ Aside from seeing the ManUre embarrassed by their footballing betters from Madrid, it's been a bleak month for grass-based games. *Rogue Squadron III* looks like being a world-beater, though.

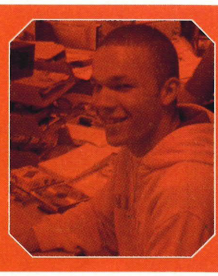
DOMINIC WINT, STAFF WRITER



The coolest thing I've seen in games this month is...

■ *The Wind Waker* is truly amazing, but the coolest moment for me so far is being taught the Hurricane Attack by Orca. Seeing little Link whirl around like a dervish is absolute gaming gold. A must-have game, no mistake.

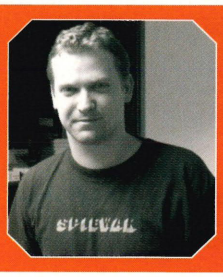
MICHAEL JACKSON, STAFF WRITER



The coolest thing I've seen in games this month is...

■ The unfolding of *The Wind Waker*'s plot after you rescue Link's sister, Aryll. If you thought an entire *Zelda* game could be based purely on something as small as rescuing a little girl, you've got a surprise coming.

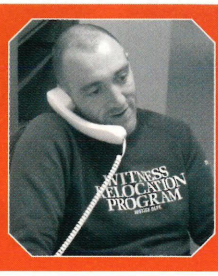
MARK SOMMER, ART EDITOR



The coolest thing I've seen in games this month is...

■ After a double-stalemate start in *NOM*'s *Winning Eleven 6* league, my Brazil team picked up their first win with a 4-2 victory over bottom-of-the-group Italy, coached by Dan – who promptly resigned.

DAN PAYNE, DEPUTY ART EDITOR



The coolest thing I've seen in games this month is...

■ Seeing Leeds beat Arsenal at Highbury, thereby handing the Premiership crown to my beloved Red Devils. It made up for all the hurt of the *Winning Eleven 6* league. I'm from Cambridge, by the way.

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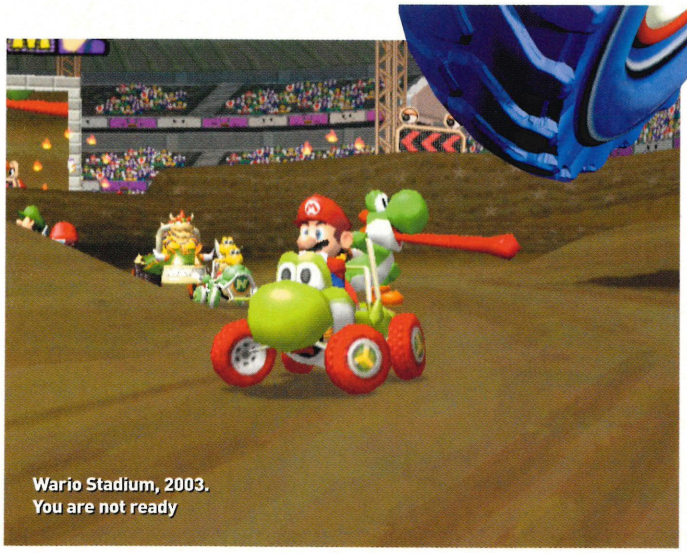
KART ATTACK!

WE HAVE EXCLUSIVE FIRST IMAGES OF *MARIO KART DOUBLE DASH* – CONSULT YOUR DOCTOR BEFORE PROCEEDING. REMAIN CALM.



Wario Stadium, 2003. You are not ready

Fancy a lap around Isle Delfino? And is that the SS Aqua?

MARIO KART DOUBLE DASH ● GAMECUBE ● OUT CHRISTMAS

A GameCube *Mario Kart* was in development. We knew. We told you. Apart from that fact, complete radio silence from Nintendo. We had to see pictures. It took a while, but here they are, exclusively. Feast your eyes on a future GameCube god.

The full name is *Mario Kart Double Dash* and it's out over here in time for Christmas. Karts have been abandoned in favour of double-seater vehicles, with one character driving and the other using weapons. There are six main pick-ups to use and eight character-specific power-ups. You can switch your guys around at will.

You'll recognise a few familiar faces in the screens, but the full character line-up runs thus: Mario, Luigi, Peach, Donkey Kong, Yoshi, Daisy, Baby Mario, Baby Luigi, Diddy Kong, Wario, Waluigi, Birdo, Bowser, Koopa, Paratroopa and Baby Bowser. Fans will also recognise a few of the courses on show here.

At the moment it looks like link-up play is your best hope of inter-console racing competition and we'll have the details next month in a massive hands-on Preplay. It also looks likely to feature co-operative two-players-in-one-kart style fun, if that floats your boat.

❑ Certainly looks hectic out there

❑ Banana skins – weapon of kings

❑ Do you like the new karts? Tell us

❑ Banked corners – we'll have that

❑ Toad's Turnpike. It's a 60mph limit, so why is he doing 104mph? Bad Bowser

❑ The rear gunner lines up a shot

❑ The replays will look fantastic

STAR WARS ROGUE SQUADRON III ● GAMECUBE ● OUT AUTUMN

❑ Full throttle, two-player Death Star action. Yes, it's alright to cry

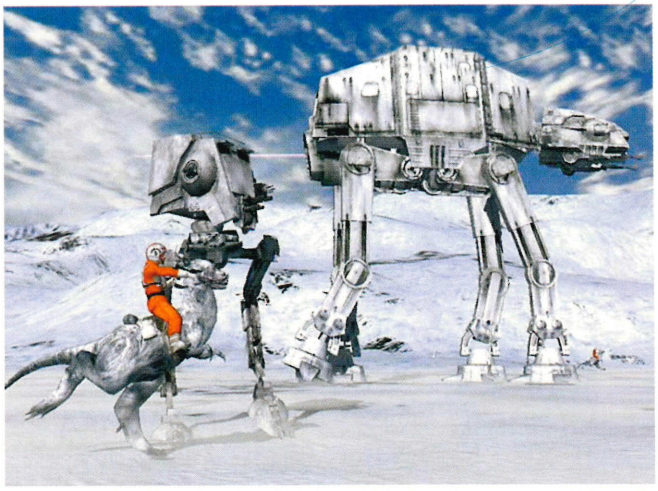
❑ 'There's too many of them!' But that just means loads more to blast

FORCE FEED

DINE OUT ON THESE BEAUTIFUL, FIRST EVER SHOTS FROM *STAR WARS ROGUE SQUADRON III: REBEL STRIKE*. TASTY.

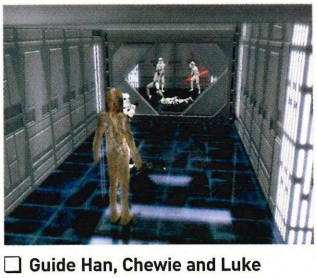
There must be a big, fat *Star Wars* graphics chip inside the GameCube – it's the only explanation. *Star Wars Rogue Squadron III: Rebel Strike* spreads the love even more thickly than ever before. It's a total *Star Wars* blowout and if you can't see that your eyes are destroyed.

Details are thin on the ground right now, but your prayers for third-person character roaming have been answered. We've seen Chewbacca mixing it up with some stormtroopers and Luke grappling up an AT-AT on the ice-planet of Hoth. There are also tauntauns to ride about on and a truly frightening first-person speeder bike section through the forests of Endor. We'll have a full hands-on Preplay next month, by which time *NOM*'s Kingsley may have stopped weeping and foaming at the mouth – to *Star Wars* fans, this is even bigger bananas than *Mario Kart*.



❑ Eagle-eyed *Star Wars* fans will notice that this looks bloody amazing. Don't look at this screenshot for too long, it may blind you with its loveliness

❑ If it moves as good as it looks, this will be the best level ever. Ever!



❑ Guide Han, Chewie and Luke through the Death Star corridor

STARFOX 2 ● GAMECUBE ● OUT TBC

FOR FOX SAKE!

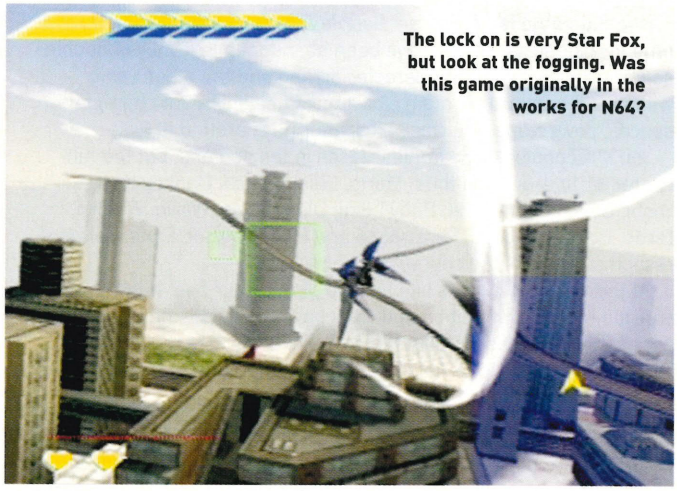
YOU WANT THE FIRST EVER SHOTS OF *STARFOX 2*, ANYWHERE? YOU'RE IN THE RIGHT PLACE.

Until we grabbed hold of the first images, the next GameCube *StarFox* game was a complete mystery to us. We all suspected a return to the space combat of the Super NES and N64 games, and it looks like we were bang-on. *StarFox 2* is a completely different experience to *Star Fox Adventures*.

Developed in conjunction with Namco, *StarFox 2* sees the return of a few familiar faces. Fox McCloud is the star of the show and his wingmen Peppy and Slippy show up in playable form. The RPG stylings of *Adventures* haven't been completely forgotten though, with at least Krystal returning from that ensemble.

The gameplay is familiar arcade dogfighting, with the Arwing space craft still looking exactly as it did in the older games. The power of 'Cube could have facilitated a rebuild, but Nintendo is sticking with familiar craft as it has in the new *F-Zero* game. The third person roaming sections are a welcome addition, with our boys roaming Corneria's surface picking off enemy ships with homing missiles. There are also sniper weapons, and a return of the class Landmaster tanks from *Lylat Wars* on the N64.

All these characters can fight against each other in a four-player deathmatch battle and you may notice the icons on the radar are the same as those in *Lylat Wars*, which is a really nice touch. Rest assured we'll be all over this like a rash in the coming issues.



The lock on is very Star Fox, but look at the fogging. Was this game originally in the works for N64?

❑ **A fox hunter's worst nightmare**

❑ **JFK's assassination – Fox style**

❑ **Hit the frog with the stick! Hit him!**

FIFA 2004 ● GAMECUBE ● OUT AUTUMN

❑ **Must only be the first group phase. Arsenal never make the knockouts**

❑ **New rule: if Henry is five yards offside, the goal still counts. Yes!**

PLAY ON...

ELECTRONIC ARTS SHOWS NEW *FIFA* GAME AS LICENSING STORM BREWS

❑ **There's a new *FIFA* game on the way. OK, so that sounds like the exact opposite of 'news', but behind-the-scenes legal wrangling in Europe threatened to kill off the franchise once and for all.**

German national team goalkeeper Oliver Kahn objected to his likeness being used in the game (as was theoretically permitted in the FIFA licence), and took his grievance to court. The result? *2002 FIFA World Cup* was pulled from sale in Germany, and Electronic Arts was ordered to compensate Kahn – opening the floodgates for other possible claims.

But look: *FIFA 2004* is still on the way. We've got the shots to prove it. Have a good sniff around them and leave EA to the tricky legal manoeuvres. We're keen to see this in motion as the series has really upped a gear of late after years of cynically raking in the cash without trying to play decent football. Game on!

METAL GEAR SOLID: THE TWIN SNAKES ● GAMECUBE ● OUT WINTER

SOLID DETAILS

NEW *METAL GEAR* IS A REMAKE OF THE PSONE GAME – THAT'S GOOD NEWS.

So there they are then, the twin Snakes

❑ **We broke the news about *Metal Gear* coming to GameCube two issues back, we guessed it must be a remake with overhauled visuals. Well, we were spot on. *Metal Gear Solid: The Twin Snakes* is indeed a remake of the brilliant PSone game. It's in good hands too, with *Eternal Darkness* developer, Silicon Knights, pressing the buttons.**

Operative Solid Snake creeps into bases snapping necks as he goes. That's the basic jist. It's remembered as one of the best PlayStation games ever, and superior even to the gorgeous looking PS2 update. The GameCube version has the graphics and the gameplay. Double win. It's out in Europe first at the end of 2003. Japan gets theirs in 2004. Make that triple win. We'll have the first screens soon enough.

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COMING UP

Guess what? More games are coming out. These are the dates...

May

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• Enter the Matrix	15/05
• Burnout 2	16/05
• Def Jam Vendetta	23/05
• Ikaruga	23/05
• Skies of Arcadia Legends	23/05
• World Racing	23/05
• BloodRayne	23/05
• Red Faction II	30/05

GAME BOY ADVANCE

• Wario Ware, Inc.	23/05
• Revenge of Shinobi	23/05
• Beach Soccer	30/05
• Robocop	30/05

June

NINTENDO GAMECUBE

• Splinter Cell	06/06
• Lost Kingdoms 2	06/06
• F1 Career Challenge	13/06
• Wario World	20/06
• The Hulk	20/06
• Sonic Adventure DX	27/06
• Big Mutha Truckers	27/06
• V-Rally 3	27/06

GAME BOY ADVANCE

• Splinter Cell	06/06
• Donkey Kong Country	06/06
• Sega Smash Pack	13/06
• Crazy Taxi: Catch a Ride	13/06
• Stuntman	20/06
• Mega Man Battle Network 3	20/06
• Hamtaro: Ham-Ham Heartbreak	27/06
• Mega Man Battle Transmission	27/06

July

NINTENDO GAMECUBE

• Futurama	04/07
• Hitman 2	11/07

GAME BOY ADVANCE

• Magical Quest 2	11/07
• Pokémon Ruby	25/07
• Pokémon Sapphire	25/07

TRUE CRIME: STREETS OF LA ● GAMECUBE ● OUT SEPTEMBER

LA LAWLESS

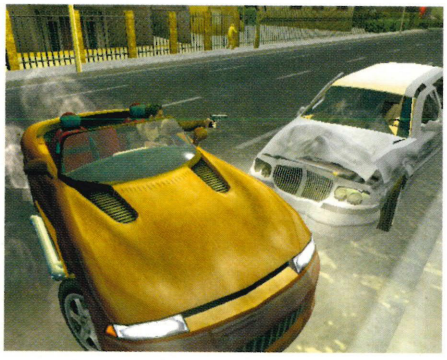
GET ALL THE LATEST SHOTS AND INFO ON ACTIVISION'S *VICE CITY* KILLER, *TRUE CRIME*.

Even with your most pro-Nintendo goggles on, it's easy to see what a brilliant game PS2's *GTA: Vice City* is. There's currently no hope of a GameCube version, but we might not need one. *True Crime: Streets of LA* is looking like it could kill *GTA* stone dead.

You play as disgraced cop, Nick Kane as he hunts down Russian and Chinese crimelords in Los Angeles. The voice of the character has been recorded by Christopher Walken, who joins a cast of Hollywood's finest including Gary Oldman and Michael Madsen.

This involves lots of cruising around in your motor doing missions on the streets of LA, but it's outside the car that the ante is upped. The hand-to-hand combat plays out like a beat 'em up, with slickly animated kung fu moves. The gunplay is boosted with the addition of *Matrix*-style Bullet-Time, meaning you can tumble through the air in slow motion while shooting.

With 300 square miles of LA mapped out and over 30 cars to 'borrow' you could waste a massive amount of time just cruising. We'll have a full hands on soon, but it looks like *GTA*-envy is about to become a thing of the past for GameCube gamers.



❑ In England we swallow our rage and swap insurance details. In America things are different

❑ 'You might want to aim a little lower if you want to hit me.' It's clearly his first day on the job

PHANTASY STAR ONLINE EPISODE III ● GAMECUBE ● OUT WINTER

Touch my deck

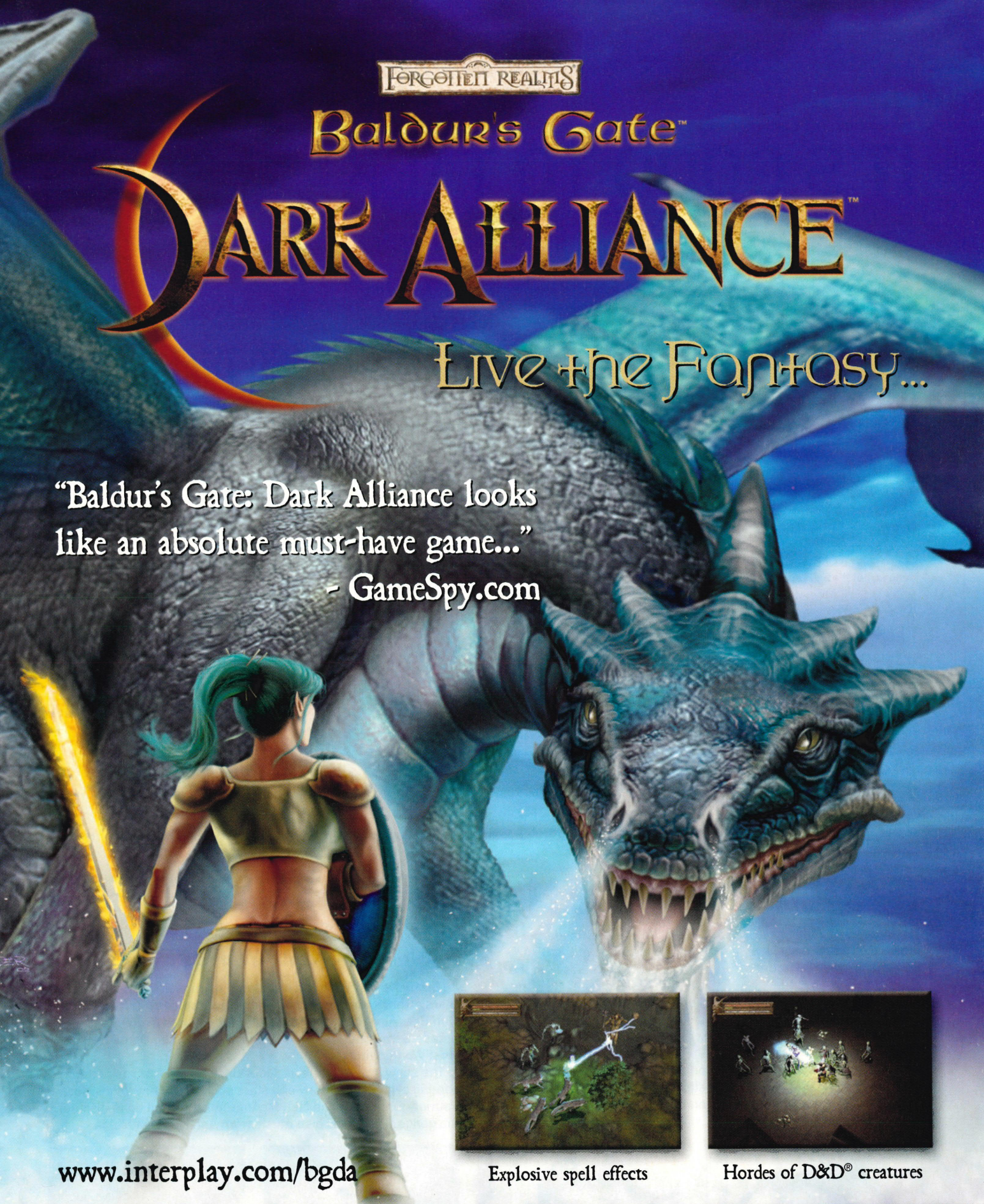
❑ Brilliant games get sequels. There's no surprise in that. But we didn't see the direction this one was taking. The new *Phantasy Star* game does away with the slick real-time fighting and replaces it with something a bit more sedate. The full game title gives it away: *Phantasy Star Online Episode III: C.A.R.D. Battle*.

That's right, cards. You win fights by playing the right battle cards as in the class-but-undervalued *Lost Kingdoms* games. Sound like a backwards step? Think about it. *Phantasy Star Online* is firstly an RPG and secondly a giant online community. People log in to hang out just talking, even if they never swing a sword. The card system capitalises on this community by giving them a tradable commodity.

The online world still centres around Ragol and the elaborate fantasy style of the previous game is very much in evidence. No announcements have yet been made on how the billing for this version works, but it's on course for a Winter release.

❑ Forget the cards, look at the length of that skirt

Could you get a bigger sword next time, please?



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XBOX

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FINAL FANTASY CRYSTAL CHRONICLES ● GAMECUBE ● OUT TBC

IT'S GOOD TO TALK

NEW SHOTS, NEW INFO. WHAT MORE COULD YOU POSSIBLY WANT? NO, WE'RE NOT DOING THAT AGAIN...

Not a month goes by without us having to wade through yet more screenshots from *Final Fantasy Crystal Chronicles*. Just feast your eyes on this latest batch that landed on our doorstep, showing more of the world than ever before.

More information has emerged on the GBA link-up feature. Connectivity is designed so that vital information for each player will appear on their GBA screen, not on the TV. This will force players to communicate with each other.

It's clear that this is not the 'next step' in the *Final Fantasy* universe, it's not a continuation of the eternally popular PlayStation series. Rather, *Crystal Chronicles* seems to draw inspiration from the cute style of *Final Fantasy IX*.

And you can clearly see the four-player action running. It also looks like the battles take place in real time although this has yet to be confirmed.

❑ Friend or foe? It may be unclear as to what this thing is, but it's big, you have to say that

❑ Not exactly overwhelming odds, so why do they all look so serious. Must be something in the water

❑ Still trying to find Southend, the *FF* team encountered more problems in the Blackwall Tunnel

FINAL FANTASY TACTICS ADVANCE ● GBA ● OUT TBC

AND THAT'S FINAL

THE GBA *FINAL FANTASY* WAGON ROLLS ON.

❑ If one helping of *FF* wasn't enough, then how about topping off your main course with some *Tactics Advance* dessert? Get stuck into these shots.

FFTA is not a direct sequel to the last in the series, it's initially set in the present and resurrects the old Judge, Clan and Region Create systems from previous incarnations. Players have to maintain an army of units and then use them in battle.

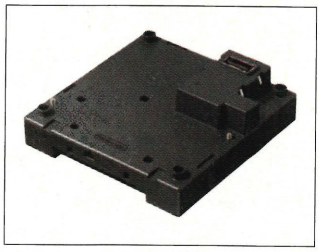
❑ If you have a forehead this big, call a doctor

GADGET GARDEN

❑ Nintendo of Japan have announced some tasty new add-ons for your GameCube and GBA. First up is the GameCube Memory Card SD Card Reader. This device slots into the GameCube's memory card slot and has an input for an SD media card. Nintendo says the Card Reader will allow save files and game upgrades to be passed over the internet.

Next up is the e-Reader Plus, an evolution of the GBA device, yet to be released in the UK, that links to other GBAs or GameCubes and allows the storage of e-Card data even when the GBA is off.

Finally, the GBA Player add-on for the GameCube, that allows you to play GBA games on the big screen, is set for a June release in Europe.



❑ Step one. Buy a GBA Player. Then take it out of the box...

❑ ... step two. Use it to play GBA games on your telly. It's easy

NINTENDO'S STARS COME OUT

IN YOUR FACE, SONY. NINTENDO GAMES TRIUMPH AT NEW AWARDS EVENT.

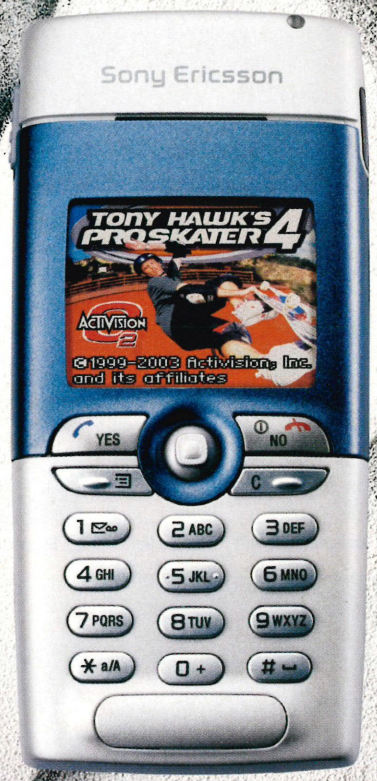
❑ Exclusive Nintendo titles came up trumps at the recent Game Stars awards ceremony scooping three trophies. *Metroid Prime* won Best Adventure Game, *Super Monkey Ball 2* took Best Arcade Game and *The Wind Waker* was crowned Game Retail's Most Wanted title.

The show, hosted by Terry Alderton, was the first mainstream gaming awards ceremony and stars such as Johnny Vegas, Tara Palmer-Tomkinson and Nell McAndrew all turned up to dish out the gongs. There was also music from Ash and Lisa Maffia.

❑ It seems everyone wants Link

❑ *Metroid Prime* – best of the lot

Sony Ericsson



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ACTIVISION O2

STATE NEWS

■ If you've heard the rumours about *Grand Theft Auto* on GameCube, we're sorry to pop your bubble. Although the exclusivity deal with Sony expires this year, Rockstar seems to have no plans to convert it to GameCube.

■ **Good news for *Mortal Kombat* fans everywhere. Midway has announced a sixth game in its blood-thirsty fighting series. No firm details have been announced yet, but it's expected to hit shops in the UK sometime in 2004. It's also said to feature online play.**

■ US games behemoth, Electronic Arts, is once again milking the bloated *Harry Potter* franchise teat. *Quidditch World Cup* will be arriving in a store near you at Christmas, fully simulating a silly, made up sport. Classic.

JAPAN NEWS

■ **The hottest rumour around is that *Rogue Squadron* developer, Factor 5 is working on an update of the classic *Pilotwings* franchise for GameCube. A GBA version is also rumoured.**

■ The first details of Nintendo's LAN link have emerged. Two GameCubes are joined via their broadband adaptors for head-to-head linked-up fun. Best get those adaptors in now ready for *Mario Kart*...

■ **Mergers rumours abound in Japan. Sega is apparently stalling on a proposed merger with pachinko machine-maker Sammy to see if Namco can come up with a better offer.**

■ There's yet more *Resident Evil* on the way. Capcom are readying *Resident Evil Code: Veronica* for a Summer release in Japan.

***PIKMIN 2* ● GAMECUBE ● OUT WINTER**

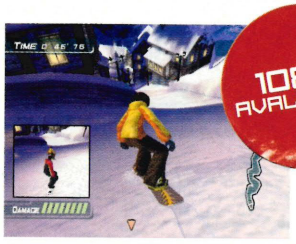
Nintendo's strategy sequel to one of the best games of last year introduces urban environments, bathtime ducks and truly enormous gorged worm creatures. Just what was missing before, then.

❑ That big pink thing is sure going to make a whole load of Pikmin...

❑ Tarmac? In *Pikmin*? Eeeeeeek!

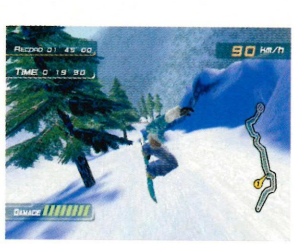
***1080° AVALANCHE* ● GAMECUBE ● OUT WINTER**

It's not out for a while, but unless you're some some of freak you don't play snowboarding games in the summer. It's looking very sweet, though, as you can see from these brand-new screens. Frosty!

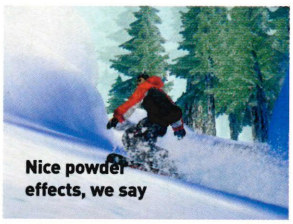


❑ He's behind you! Oh no he isn't!

❑ Even in stills it looks very quick



❑ Clothes flap in the wind. Stylish

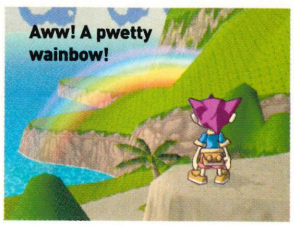


***GIFTPIA* ● GAMECUBE ● OUT TBC**

Nintendo's bizarro trading RPG apparently cost an absolute mint to make. Before localising the game into English and some other less-good languages for a US/European release, the bill is already in the region of £2.5 million.

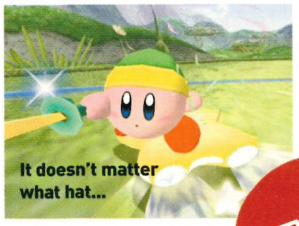
❑ It all looks a little bit Ubi Soft. No disrespect intended, but it does

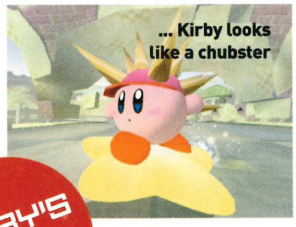
❑ Cel-shading. Time to give it up



KIRBY'S AIR RIDE ● GAMECUBE ● OUT TBC

More Nintendo racing, but a shade different to the corkscrewing capers of *F-Zero*. Fat boy Kirby surfs through the air on a star. He really does, you'll have to trust us on that. Look at the pictures, if you don't believe us.





KIRBY'S AIR RIDE

❑ Ride stars like a fat groupie

❑ Classic Nintendo bomb action

❑ Four-player: bound to be a laugh

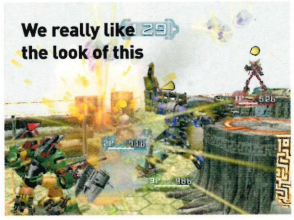
CUSTOM ROBO ● GAMECUBE ● OUT TBC

An update of the little-known N64 fighting game from Japan, this actually looks surprisingly awesome. Think fast-paced, four-player fun, rather than tedious robo strategy. We're getting ready for it, are you?

CUSTOM ROBO

❑ There's a lot going on here, but it'll all make sense, apparently

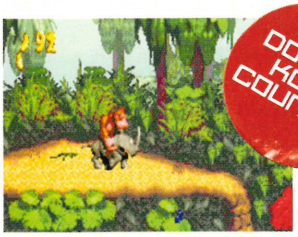
❑ Future robot design: unlikely



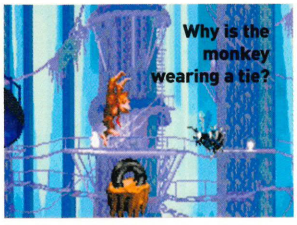
DONKEY KONG COUNTRY ● GBA ● OUT JUNE

It was massive on the Super NES and it looks like the GBA version does a good job reproducing one of the most technically impressive games of the 16-bit era. So if you want a furry trip down memory lane, look out for this one.

DONKEY KONG COUNTRY



❑ Nature's way can be confusing



❑ That's the G you need, man. Go grab it with both your furry palms

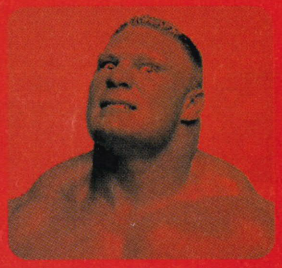
YOUR VOTE

Nintendo OFFICIAL MAGAZINE

NOM POLL

Last month we asked you...

"WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE MORE WRESTLING GAMES ON GAMECUBE?"



✔ YES! GRAPPLE ON!

56% VOTES

"No console is complete without a game where you can chuck your best mate off a ladder!"
James Smith

✘ NO! RUCK OFF!

44% VOTES

"To be honest, who would want to recreate a brawl between two drunken sissies wearing pants? I don't see the fun in that."
Darryl Moore

NEXT MONTH

This month we ask you...

"WOULD A PLAYABLE DEMO DISC ON THE COVER OF *NOM* HELP YOU DECIDE WHAT GAMES TO BUY?"

IF YOUR ANSWER IS YES SEND YOUR E-MAILS TO:
Nompoll-one@emap.com

IF YOUR ANSWER IS NO SEND YOUR E-MAILS TO:
Nompoll-two@emap.com

Remember to include any relevant comments!

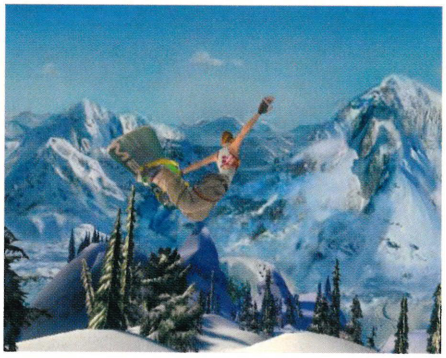
SSX 3 ● GAMECUBE ● OUT LATE 2003

BACK ON THE PISTE

THE SNOWBOARDING MENTALLISTS ARE BACK AGAIN TO TAKE ON THE MOUNTAIN. IT'LL WIN EVENTUALLY...

Elise and her friends are inviting you back out onto the snow as *SSX* prepares to ride again. You'll get to ride down all-new courses and complete over 100 challenges. And a new addition to the series will see you seamlessly shift from one race to the next as you hurtle downhill.

As you move through competitions you'll be able to take on Big Challenges and uncover all manner of hidden collectibles. You can also customise the characters that you'll unlock. EA Sports' Big! franchise hits the spot as far as music is concerned with *SSX 3* including tracks from the X-Ecutioners and Queens of the Stone Age.



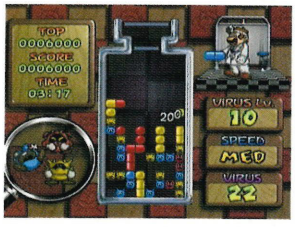
❑ **The new *SSX* game features packs of fearsome wolves who roam the icy slopes and attack. Maybe...**

NINTENDO PUZZLE COLLECTION ● GAMECUBE ● OUT TBC

Brain Trio

❑ Since *Tetris*, Nintendo gamers have been privy to some of the finest slices of puzzle gaming out there. Trouble is, *Tetris* casts a long shadow, obscuring many other games.

Nintendo Puzzle Collection lumps together three classic puzzlers for GameCube. *Dr Mario*, *Yoshi's Cookie* and *Panel de Pon* (a.k.a. *Tetris Attack*, *Pokémon Puzzle League*) all get a slight graphical rework for the reissue, and all now feature four-player battle games.



❑ ***Dr Mario*: Take out a nasty virus by dropping pills into a bottle. Easy? Try playing it**

❑ ***Yoshi's Cookie*: Shift cookies around and make the whole stack disappear. Crazeee**

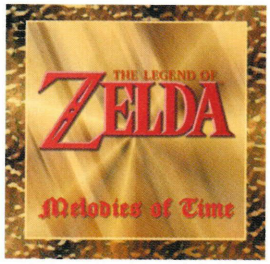
❑ ***Panel de Pon*: Rotate blocks around to make them link up and disappear. Sound familiar?**

BAD NEWS

❑ First the bad news. The *Ocarina of Time/Master Quest* bonus disc included with *The Wind Waker* will only run on a TV that supports 60Hz mode. However, *The Wind Waker* does work, so don't panic.

GOOD NEWS

❑ However, on the bright side, if you're nuts about the Link – and let's face it, who isn't – then you should be looking forward to the next issue of *Nintendo Official Magazine* when we'll be giving away an exclusive 12-track CD packed with *Zelda* game tunes from past and present, including melodies from Link's latest, *The Wind Waker*, *Ocarina of Time*, *A Link To The Past* and more. Reserve your copy now.



FIRST SIGHT

Here's a first look at which games will be hitting the headlines in the future

PRINCE OF PERSIA: THE SANDS OF TIME

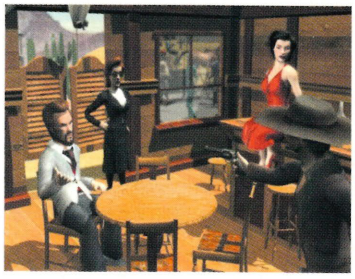
FORMAT: GAMECUBE
OUT: TBC

The classic makes a triumphant return in this action-packed update.

THE MOVIES

FORMAT: GAMECUBE
OUT: TBC

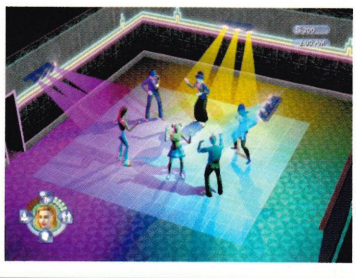
Peter Molyneux returns with this movie studio simulator. Set in the roaring 1920s, you'll have to decide which movies to make and which stars to put in them.



THE SIMS: BUSTIN' LOOSE

FORMAT: GAMECUBE
OUT: TBC

The Sims are breaking out of the house and entering the real world. Choose a career and watch them.



HULK™

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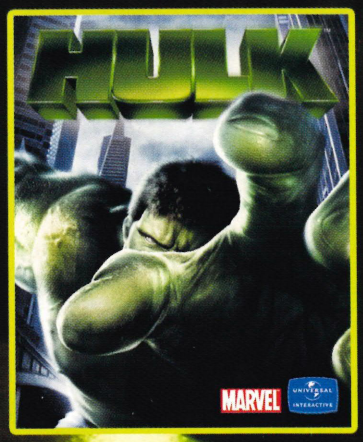
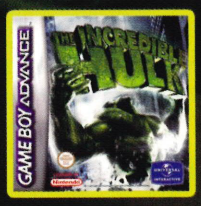
UNLEASH THE FURY!

Following the events of the blockbuster Universal Pictures film, troubled scientist Dr. Bruce Banner and his alter ego, The Hulk, battle The Leader, a terrifying villain intent on unleashing a relentless army of gamma creatures.





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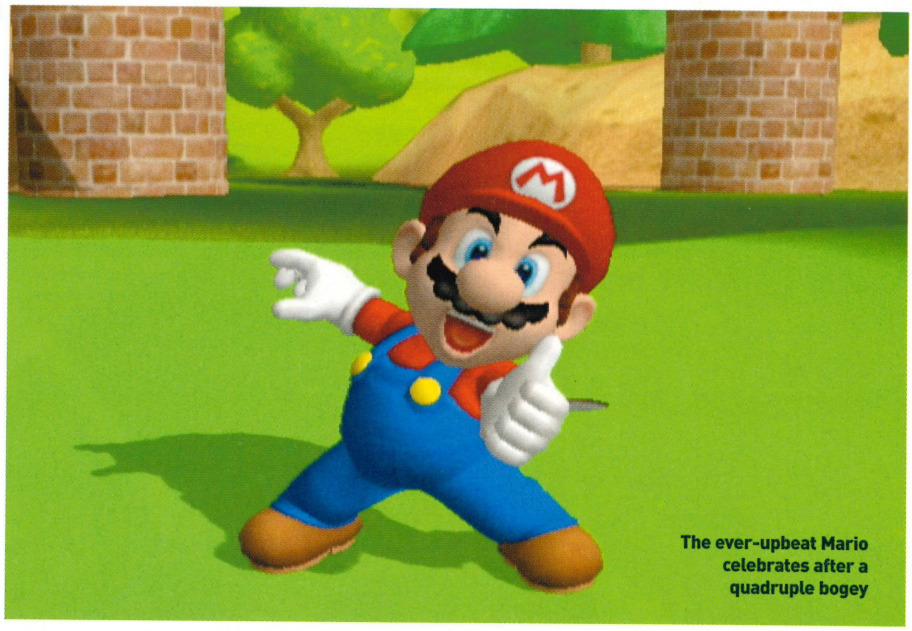
MARIO GOLF TOADSTOOL TOUR ● GAMECUBE ● OUT AUTUMN

FUN AND FORE-LICS

WE'LL ADMIT WE HATE THE NAME, BUT BOW-WOWS IN BUNKERS IS JUST GAMING GENIUS.

As game names go, *Mario Golf Toadstool Tour* probably stands out as the cheesiest GameCube title yet, but as it stars Mario we'll let it ride. After all, it may be the best golf game on GameCube.



The ever-upbeat Mario celebrates after a quadruple bogey

❑ Peach is a swinger – we always knew she was

And the reason for that? Bow-wows in bunkers, that's what. As you can see from the screen below, the classic chained-up chompers sit patiently waiting for your ball to land in the sand, so you'll have to hit the fairway at all costs or drop a shot.

All your favourite stars are teeing off later this year, including the little-used Waluigi, who last appeared in *Mario Party 4*. Expect the return of over-the-top fun and games, including scorching tee-shots for extra yards and inspired course designs, just like the N64 version. With a US release date set for 30 June, we'll have a Preplay very shortly and a review in time for the game's UK release in the Autumn.

❑ Controversial – Waluigi goose-steps across the tee

❑ A Bow-wow in a bunker would even scare Tiger

❑ As you'd expect, DK has all the power you'll need

GAMECUBE SALES CHART

GAME
www.game.uk.com

Link and Samus are at the top of the chart. For one moment we thought it would be Bomberman...

	TITLE	PUBLISHER
1	Zelda: The Wind Waker	Nintendo
2	Metroid Prime	Nintendo
3	Super Smash Bros. Melee	Nintendo
4	Super Monkey Ball 2	Infogrames
5	Super Mario Sunshine	Nintendo
6	Tiger Woods PGA Tour 2003	EA
7	Luigi's Mansion	Nintendo
8	Resident Evil Zero	Capcom
9	The Sims	EA
10	Bomberman Generations	Vivendi

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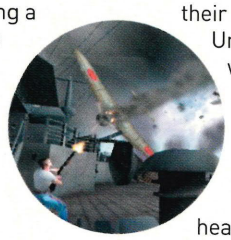
MEDAL OF HONOR RISING SUN ● GAMECUBE ● OUT WINTER

WAR LIKE SUSHI

TAKE ON ALL OF JAPAN AS *MEDAL OF HONOR* TRAVELS TO PEARL HARBOR.

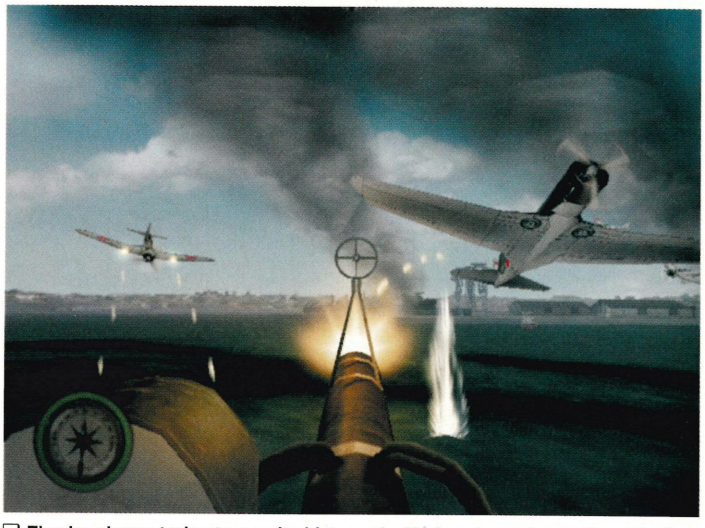
The attack on Pearl Harbor is remembered as one of the darkest days in US military history, but the *Medal of Honor* games have never shied away from painting a true picture of war. The latest in the series, *Medal of Honor Rising Sun*, is set in the Pacific war zone from 1941-1944.



But enough of the boring history textbook stuff, what does that actually mean? Well, as Marine Corporal Joseph Griffin you have to repel that famous Japanese onslaught, lead the assault on Guadalcanal and bust PoWs out of a Japanese camp in the Philippines.

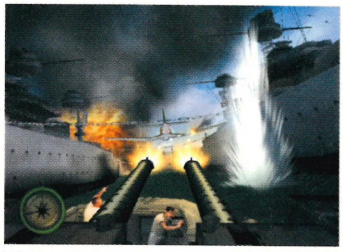
From the first batch of shots you see here, it's certainly looking the business. And that's quite an achievement given that 27 members of the original *MoH* team defected to set up on their own as Sparks Unlimited. They're working on a series of war games for Activision under the *Call of Duty* brand name.

It'll be quite a head-to-head battle and the first shots fired by the *Medal of Honor* guys look to have hit the target. The game is out at the end of 2003 and the biggest new feature so far is the inclusion of a co-operative two-player mode. For the record, the Sparks game is set to appear in 2004.



They're always trying to rewrite history, the Yanks – try and save Pearl Harbor

He may be ugly, but he's one of yours



Two barrels – clearly better than one

Why can't you play as the enormous flesh-eating bear creature for once?

SWORD OF MANA ● GBA ● OUT AUTUMN

TAKE A SLASH

When Square was lured off by Sony with its promise of shiny discs, it seemed like a beautiful gaming friendship was gone for good. But wait! Nintendo and Square are playing nice together again – first *Final Fantasy*, now *Sword of Mana*.

The merest mention of 'mana' gets Super NES RPG fans excited. *Secret of Mana* and *Legend of Mana* were solid-gold classics, melding *Zelda*-style adventuring with deep stats and magic. *Secret of Mana* continues this bloodline on GBA.

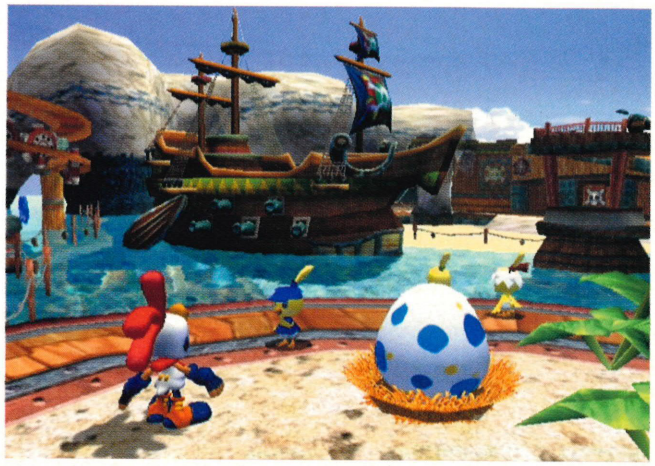
Expect a heavy emphasis on action, sweet 2D visuals and a massive variety of beasts to meet and slay. The Super NES games also featured co-operative multiplayer modes, so there's a good chance of link-up action here, too.

BILLY HATCHER AND THE GIANT EGG ● GAMECUBE ● OUT AUTUMN

JUST HATCHED

Along with Shigeru Miyamoto, Sega's Yuji Naka wrote the rule book on console platform games. The *Sonic the Hedgehog* games made him famous and now he's got a new baby, *Billy Hatcher and the Giant Egg*.

Young Billy Hatcher wears a chicken costume. He rolls eggs around to solve puzzles and occasionally hatches out helpful creatures. It's vibrant, colourful and completely off its head. Sega's Sonic Team don't often misfire though, so check out the pic and expect great things. This quirky 3D platformer hits the USA in the Fall. In proper English, that means the Autumn.



Will Billy Hatcher be as successful as Sonic the Hedgehog? It's a tall order, but maybe he's got eggs-actly what it takes. Oh, Jesus...

volition

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NOM PRESENTS...

THE 10 GREATEST NINTENDO LADIES

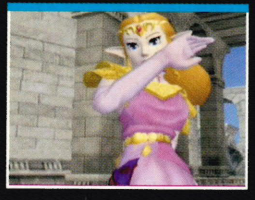
Okay, we know they're not real. But, oh, if they were, we'd be the first round their house with a box of Milk Tray and a bottle of plonk. Here are the top ten ladies that *NOM* would like to hold hands with, and if they were really lucky we might even buy them a 99.

1 PRINCESS ZELDA
SSBM GAMECUBE

Come on, this wouldn't even be a top-ten game without this little lady making an appearance. She's certainly improved with age from a pixellated princess that appeared in the early days to the stunning bastion of womanhood that greets your eyes on the *SSBM* intro.

DID YOU KNOW?

Miyamoto-san drew some of the inspiration for the *Zelda* games from the 1985 Ridley Scott movie *Legend*. The film told the tale of Jack, a young warrior trying to defeat the Lord of Darkness.



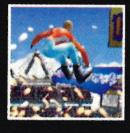
2 B.ORCHID
KILLER INSTINCT GOLD N64

Orchid is 5'7" of ass-whupping lady. She was ordered to infiltrate the *Killer Instinct* tournament, but she met her match in *KI Gold* when she was transported 2,000 years back in time to face an even greater foe.

DID YOU KNOW?

Killer Instinct was a flesh-ripping product of the famous Rare studios and made its appearance in the arcades way back in 1994. One year later it debuted on the Super NES.

3 ELISE
SSX TRICKY GAMECUBE



If only snowboarding games took place in the desert, then the sultry miss Elise wouldn't have to be so wrapped up. Even clad in the finest winter gear, Elise still manages to tease the gaming public with the knowledge that underneath all of those clothes she's totally naked.

DID YOU KNOW?

Only adding to the allure, this lip-smacking-tastic lady is voiced by none other than über-babe, Lucy Liu. Mike and Dom have got all the time in the world for the best third of *Charlie's Angels*.

4 MARIAN
DOUBLE DRAGON NES

A creation of the not-so liberated 1980s, Marian was a damsel in distress, showing up at the start of *Double Dragon* just in time to get kidnapped. But not before she'd flashed her knickers.

DID YOU KNOW?

Double Dragon was immortalised in celluloid in 1994 with an all-action *DD* movie. Marian was played by Alyssa Milano, who's since appeared in TV's *Charmed*.

5 JILL VALENTINE
RESIDENT EVIL GAMECUBE

People make strong bonds in extreme situations, that's why Jill is so close to our hearts. Chris has the brawn, but does he get the Lockpick? No, didn't think so. And he'd look crap in a mini-skirt.

DID YOU KNOW?

The *Resident Evil* remake was the first GameCube title to span two discs, it also features plot lines and locations not seen in the PSone original.

6 JOANNA DARK *PERFECT DARK* N64

Reserve your hatred, people. She may have divorced Nintendo and run off to marry Microsoft, but there's no denying this lady's credentials. The perfect spy, the consummate professional and British to boot. Back in 2000, the Nintendo world was waiting on Joanna, and she didn't disappoint us.

DID YOU KNOW?

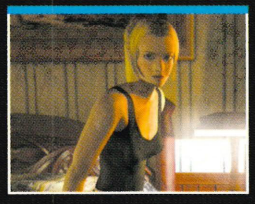
The lovely Joanna Dark underwent some truly radical changes for the Japanese release of *Perfect Dark*. The main alteration to Ms Dark involved being given a full-on manga makeover in all of the cut-scenes. It's nice, but not the same.

7 ALEX *ETERNAL DARKNESS* GAMECUBE

Discovering that your family contains a legacy of pure evil would disturb the very best of us, but even seeing her decapitated grandfather and being locked in a haunted house with a demonic book can't stop miss Roivas from flicking her blonde hair back and getting stuck into the darkness. You go girl.

DID YOU KNOW?

Eternal Darkness was developed by Canada's Silicon Knights studio and was the first-ever Nintendo game to be released in Canada before the USA. Now that's progress.



8 TEAM AUSTRALIA *BEACH SPIKERS* GAMECUBE

It's slightly unfair to include both, but these volley babes can't be split asunder by some humdrum top-ten. Extra points have to be awarded for the fact that they often like to hug each other. Go on.

DID YOU KNOW?

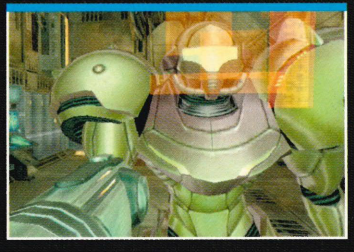
Beach Spikers-owning Sega fans can treat themselves to a trip down memory lane as various characters from *Daytona USA*, *Space Channel 5* and *Virtua Cop* can be unlocked.

9 SAMUS ARAN *METROID PRIME* GAMECUBE

Samus hasn't got time for love, she's too busy wiping the smiles off relentless alien hordes that infest outer space. But you know that underneath that enormous Varia suit there's a heart waiting to be melted by the right alien-basher.

DID YOU KNOW?

Samus kept her identity a secret in the very first *Metroid* game. She only showed off her lady-ness after you completed the game.

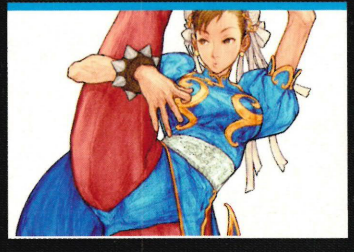


10 CHUN-LI *SUPER STREETFIGHTER 2* SUPER NES

'But we like Cammy better' we hear you cry and yes, she was fleshed out by Kylie in the movie, but Chun-Li! The bunches, the short blue skirt, the Spinning Bird Kick. She's all feminine beauty and she'd kick Cammy's arse all over town.

DID YOU KNOW?

Hailing from the People's Republic of China, Chun-Li is 170cm tall and practises the art of kung fu. Her blood type is A, should you care.



Now it's your turn

Love them or hate them you can't deny they exist and they're taking over the world... again. *Pokémon Ruby* and *Sapphire* have already sold over five million copies and they haven't even hit Europe yet. Now we want you to send us your best Poké moments. One lucky reader will win a year's subscription to *NOM* and a copy of either *Ruby* or *Sapphire*. To enter, jot 25 words about your favourite moment, add your name, age, address and home phone number then send it to: **'My Favourite *Pokémon* Moment', NOM, Bushfield House, Orton Centre, Peterborough, Cambs PE2 5UW.**

F-ZERO GC

NINTENDO GAMECUBE

Buckle up for the ride of a lifetime in this exclusive first play of Nintendo's lightning-quick racer. Think of the fastest thing ever. No, faster than that...

LOG ON

http://f-zero.jp/

IN BRIEF

Nintendo's other huge racing franchise gets a stunning update from Sega's arcade racing masters, Amusement Vision. Their CV includes solid-gold classics like *Daytona USA*, *Scud Race* and *Super Monkey Ball*, so it's in good hands.

DETAILS

Release
Autumn

Developer
Nintendo/Sega Amusement Vision

Publisher
Nintendo

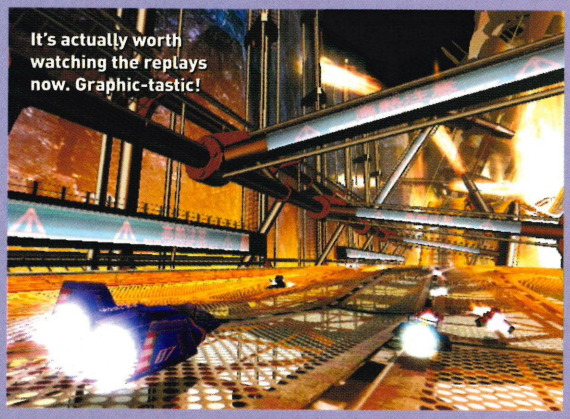
Game Genre
Futuristic racing

Life's funny sometimes. On our way to Nintendo for a world-exclusive play of GameCube *F-Zero*, we got caught in heavy traffic on Junction 12 of the M1.

Two hours to travel a grand total of about three miles. When we got to Nintendo, we experienced space cars blasting around loops at 1,700km/h. Point, counterpoint. Slow car, fast cars. Ha-ha, God – you're a funny one.

Sega, it appears, can be trusted. The *F-Zero* code that dried out our non-blinking eyes was early, but looked lovely and moved faster than a cheetah in a GTi. Above all, it remains an *F-Zero* game. Sega have stuck to the blueprint: no weapons, boost drains power, Mute City, Port Town, you get the drift. Test out your pure piloting skills as a wonderful future world blasts past in eye-blistering hyper colour. Ready?

That's what it looks like in-game. Only faster. No messing. Faster than your mind can accept

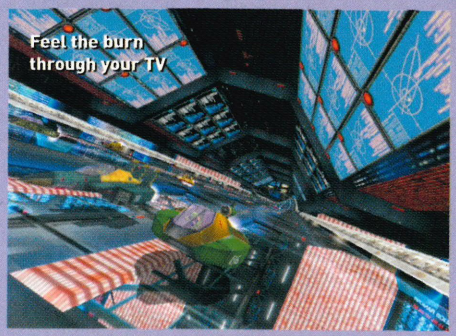


It's actually worth watching the replays now. Graphic-tastic!

In the future, one-arm bandits are bigger

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Q: I need to play this right now.
A: Well, you can't. Unless you get a flight to Tokyo where there are preview pods in some stores. It's released in Japan at the end of June, but the UK version isn't likely to hit stores until the leaves start falling off the trees again. Sorry about that.



Feel the burn through your TV

Q: Wasn't there supposed to be an arcade version of this out at some stage?
A: The arcade and home versions are based on the same code. Indeed, for Japan, Nintendo has confirmed you'll be able to take saved games from one to the other. The UK machine shares the same elaborate rotating cockpit cabinet and is due out here in the Autumn too.

Try to keep it under 1,200km/h as you pass the police station

Q: What are the controls like?
A: The basic button layout is faithful to the N64 game. A accelerates, B is brake, Y is for boost. L and R let you corner more sharply and double-taps spin and flip the ship for rudimentary attacks. You can use analogue or D-Pad to steer, but analogue is the choice of kings as you gradually tilt it to maintain speed through the bends without sliding.

F-ZERO GC P.26
SONIC ADVENTURE DX P.32
ENTER THE MATRIX P.34
XIII P.36
V-RALLY 3 P.38
VIEWTIFUL JOE P.40
BEYOND GOOD AND EVIL P.44
THE HOBBIT P.46

BOY RACER

CAPTAIN FALCON

Ship: Blue Falcon
Weight: 1,260kg
Body: B
Boost: C
Grip: B

F-Zero poster boy, Falcon, is most people's first choice. He's a good all-rounder, but needs to corner well as his boost speed on the straights is a little bit weak.

DR STEWART

Ship: Golden Fox
Weight: 1,420kg
Body: D
Boost: A
Grip: D

Doc Stewart is your basic speed demon. Make sure you've got your cornering skills down so you don't take the fat damage, thereby reducing the boost you can use.

PILOT PICO

Ship: Wild Goose
Weight: 1,620kg
Body: B
Boost: B
Grip: C

Another good all-rounder is green alien monkey man Pico. If you're a demon at tapping L and R to corner, Pico's sweet boost could blast you into first place.

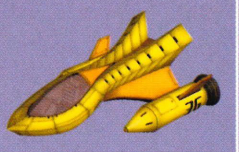
SAMURAI GOROH

Ship: Fire Stingray
Weight: 1,820kg
Body: A
Boost: D
Grip: B

Not the quickest out there, but Goroh's craft is built like a tank and corners like a Scalextric car. A good bet for those who keep crashing into walls like an idiot.

PRINCESS RAMODA

Ship: Spark Moon
Weight: 1,620kg
Body: B
Boost: C
Grip: B



Okay, so she's not a boy racer. She's a 16-year-old girl. When she's not obsessing over robot boy bands or crying, she's kicking your ass all over Mute City.

PHOENIX

Ship: Rainbow Phoenix
Weight: 1,080kg
Body: B
Boost: B
Grip: C

Dresses like a pantomime villain, but has the sort of ride that'll be on the cover of *Max Power* in a few hundred years. A good all-round racer.

MUTE CITY

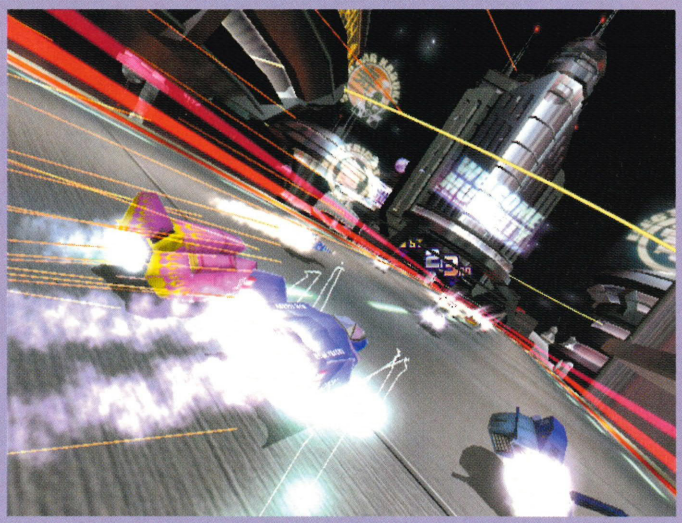
Our first taste of GameCube-powered *F-Zero* came on familiar territory, except Mute City's never looked this good. The basic figure of eight track hangs in the sky above swirling red plasma clouds. Futuristic towers reach into the sky and criss-cross walkways reach over the top of the track. It's dark, but the neon lights and bright holographic projections at track-side keep it looking interesting.

It's a fast circuit. We blatted around the first lap in a shade under 30 seconds and the boost was activated. It was at this point we learned the meaning of the word rapid.

A squeeze of Ⓨ and white-hot plasma propels the craft forward. The cars that were in front of you are now hurtling at you as if they're not moving. The scenery blurs. Your mind thinks a violent swear word as you hurtle into the bend.

But that's where the clever bit happens. Thanks to some sort of ninja magic, these cars are still steerable when you're smashing along with the speedo topping 2,000km/h. Thing is, the boost here hammers your energy like never before. You've really got to keep an eye on it. Better still, hit the yellow booster pads and boost for free. Hit one of your own boosts then and white lightning envelops the ship as you rocket away. Impressive.

☐ The on-screen display looks to have changed little from the N64 game



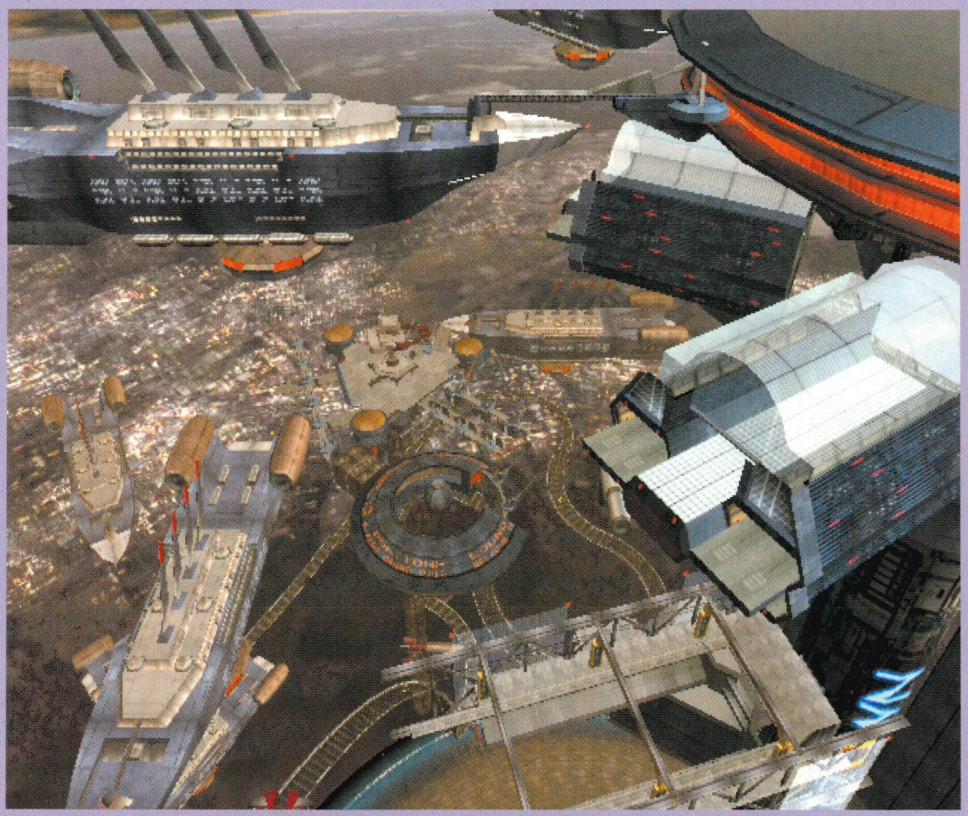
☐ The future is going to rule so bad. Lasers, holograms, food pills. Yes!

PORT TOWN 1

The second track we test drove in the new game was easier than the first. The 30-second laps around Mute City left precious little margin for error, but the swirling Port Town opener was twice as long. You're flipped up out of the ground onto the starting grid and initially blast through a mesh halfpipe. The pipe then seals over and throws you into a twisty steel duct.

In the first part of the duct, it's foot to the floor time. Roll on the ceiling, up the walls, do anything to get a lead. The second half throws in nasty obstacles like massive metal struts intersecting the inside of the pipe and a series of moving posts intent on hitting you as you thrash by at well over a 1,000km/h.

The pipe winds through an impressive space port. There's a central column with a saucer-shaped top and a series of arms off that with giant space cruisers moored in. Menacing brown gas swirls all around and the racing craft look tiny compared to the structures around them. A fast lap here is low fifties, but miss the duct hazards and a first place finish isn't too tough.



☐ Surely there is no aeronautical reason for giant space cruisers to be shaped like big boats?

GREEN PLANT

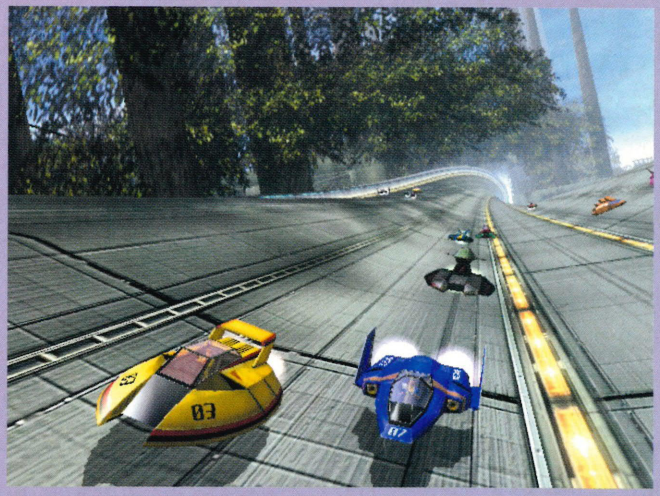
The toughest track of the four we raced was the Green Plant biodome. Again it's split between open-road sections and a winding tube blast, but the track layout makes it a nightmare. The back straight has the tube section diving and rising back though it. You don't notice when you're going through the tube first time as you're disorientated, but the back straight has you swerving nervously around the intersecting tube.

It's very difficult to maintain any kind of speed, but at least it looks good. A white-hot sun blazes in the sky and rows of trees reach their branches low across the track. It's lavishly green and blasting past the fauna too close whips up a blizzard of leaves. It's a really nice effect.

It's a tough course, because the tube section is basically rising and falling vertically, like you're riding on top of a radiowave. Positioning inside the tube is critical to maintaining speed, as is boosting like a maniac and hitting the boost pads on the back straight if you want to get ahead of the field.

You can align yourself to narrowly graze past the tube, but it's tough. Lap times on a good run are mid to low fifties and we had real trouble breaking into the top ten.

As you blat past those trees over there the leaves swirl all around



The ships look better than in olden times. Precisely 427 per cent better

PORT TOWN 2

The second course around Port Town misses out the duct section completely, but compensates with some of the biggest air in *F-Zero* history. You get an entirely new angle on the space port as the track winds through the upper reaches and you get to see a giant-sized Rob the Robot on the top deck of the station. As far as we've seen, this is the only nod to Nintendo's heritage on any of the many courses.

There are a pair of long uphill climbs early in the circuit and you wonder where all this is leading. Second time there are a stack of turbos on the hill. It feels like the ominous climb on a giant roller coaster before you plunge into oblivion, except when you plunge over the brow of this hill, there ain't no track to catch you. For the initial couple of seconds in the air, you can't even see the track below. All you can see is sky.

This lasts for a good five or six seconds depending on how fast you hit the ramp. When you eventually crash down to earth, there's the brilliant sight of the other racers crashing down around you. The most prominent feature is the glowing white turbos and against the night sky it looks like a shower of shooting stars. Again it's a long circuit and you'll be lapping in the mid-fifties, providing you don't hit anything.

This is part of the big climb up to the jump of justice. Smell the fear

The speedo in the bottom corner shows we're doing about half top speed

THAT'S PROGRESS

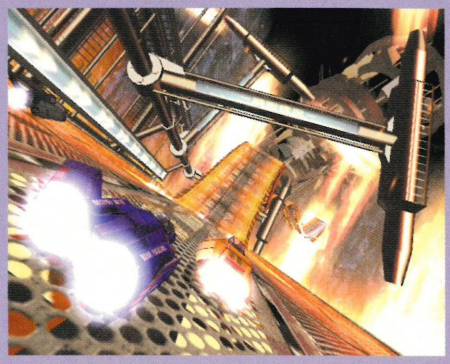
Casting a critical eye over the basic facts, *F-Zero GC* doesn't seem like a massive leap forward from the classy *F-Zero X* on N64: there are 30 cars on the track; the multiplayer is four-person, split-screen racing; hell, even the rival cars rob from the past with names like Little Wyvern, Twin Noritta and Mighty Typhoon. Well, enough of that, let's look at some pretty pictures...

F-ZERO, SUPER NES, 1991

A star is born. The Super NES could spin flat, course-shaped pictures in a really stylish way. Add some angular spaceships on the top and you have yourself a racer.

F-ZERO X, N64, 1998

It's 3D, but where are the backdrops? It moves quickly, but the new version runs at double the pace. The graphical style is still faithful to the original Super NES game.

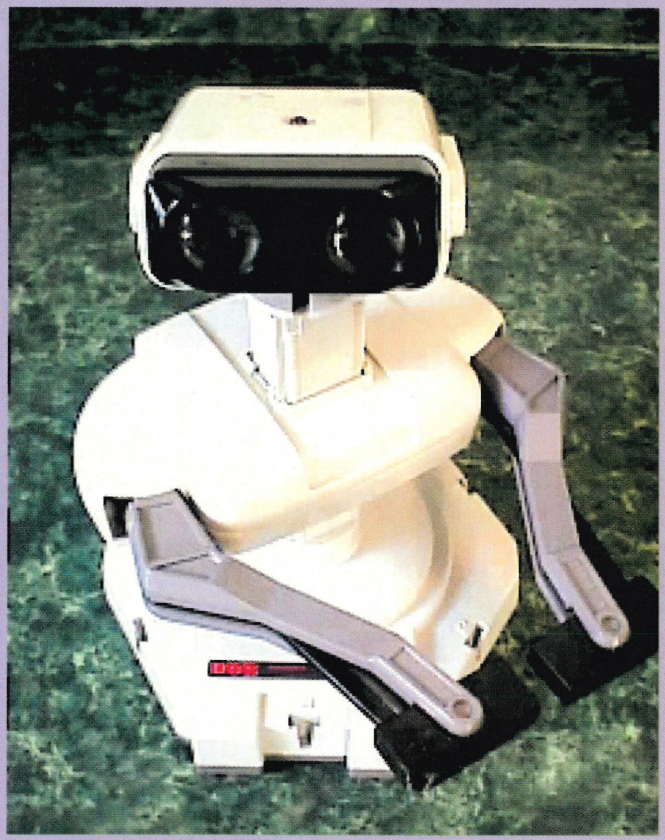


F-ZERO GC, GAMECUBE, 2003

This is the present. The *F-Zero* universe is fleshed out into a believable, grimy futuristic world. You're now in this place, racing very quickly indeed. You'll love it.

WHO IS... ROB THE ROBOT?

This little guy was a neat peripheral released for the NES back in 1985. ROB is an acronym that stands for Robotic Operating Buddy. Dodgy robots were cool back then, but not cool enough to save ROB from the dustbin of history. If you need to learn more about this phenomenon, watch the film *Short Circuit*. Only two games ever made use of his plastic ass, so people lost interest. If you've got one now, they're worth serious coin. Send us yours. Go on...



☐ Look into his baleful robot eyes. Tell him why you don't love him no more

☐ We thought about it and that big black ball can serve no logical purpose

☐ Drop it into third and be ready with the handbrake in case you stall

STYLE AND SUBSTANCE

What you'll see in the exclusive screens is that this isn't some cheeky nod to the company's glorious past like *SSBM* and the new *Mario Kart* game. The new *F-Zero* universe paints a grimy, believable world at track-side where there was previously nothing.

It's not at all cute. Tracks are all iron tunnels, gleaming skyscrapers and *Blade Runner* neon. It really doesn't look like a Nintendo game at all, being the exact polar opposite of *The Wind Waker*. That's where it helps having Sega on board. They clearly have a vision of how a futuristic racing game should look and aren't getting hung up on Nintendo-fying the whole thing.

On this evidence, that was a wise move. The extra grunt of GameCube also means the whole thing shifts as it should. Seriously, in comparison, the N64 game looks like it's running through quick-drying cement, in slow motion.

After hitting yet another small bird, Captain Falcon decided he needed a windscreen...

... probably a good idea to pick up a new futuristic jump suit, too. That one's been around since the Super NES days – it must reek by now

The driving lessons of the future must be tricky. Lesson one: do 2,000km/h upside down

That yellow icon you can see in the distance is a speed boost pad

"NOM OPINION"

F-Zero GC looks stunning on GameCube. It plays exactly like the *F-Zero* of old, but now looks as good as it always needed to. Hardcore fans will be salivating, as it gives them the chance to test their *F-Zero* skills in a brilliant new place. Just don't expect a complete reinvention of the series. It's not suddenly an RPG or something stupid like that.

NINTENDO GAMECUBE

LOG ON

www.sega.com

IN BRIEF

Dr. Eggman is up to his usual tricks, stealing Chaos Emeralds and all that, and Sonic and the gang are hot on his heels. Choose from one of six characters and speed, hammer or fish your way through their separate adventures.

DETAILS

Release
June

Developer
Sonic Team

Publisher
Sega

Game Genre
Platform Adventure

The vomit-inducing corkscrews are very *F-Zero*, don't you think?

Watch out for the Killer whale – hedgehogs are its staple diet

SONIC ADVENTURE DX DIRECTOR'S CUT

Once again, Sonic is unleashed on your GameCube, this time in a rehash of one of his greatest ever adventures. Blink and you'll miss him, folks.

Sonic has been given a slight graphical overhaul – nice water

Despite impressive sales, we found *Sonic Adventure 2 Battle* to be a bit of a disappointment. The levels were poorly designed and Sonic had no flow. Now he's back in another super-speedy 3D adventure, and this time he's on proper form.

Although *Sonic DX* comes after *Sonic Adventure 2 Battle* on GameCube, it was the first of the two to arrive on Dreamcast, and is widely agreed to be better.

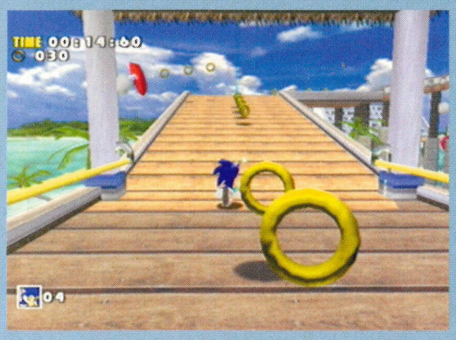
Dr. Eggman is out to snag all of the Chaos Emeralds and use their energy as part of a plan to resurrect a huge monster to help him take over the world. Sonic and the gang have got to use all their skills to get to the Emeralds before he does and put an end to his evil plot.

Sonic Adventure DX has undergone a number of tweaks and enhancements to keep Nintendo gamers happy, so it's one to look forward to come June.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Q: I used to play the original *Sonic Adventure* on the Dreamcast. Are there any major differences?

A: *Sonic Adventure DX Director's Cut* is essentially the same game as it was on the Sega Dreamcast. However, from what we've noticed so far, graphical enhancements such as an improved frame-rate and smoother-looking characters are apparent, as well as a cool blurry water effect when you jump into the wet stuff.



Where does he put all those huge Rings anyway?

Further additions include a brand-new, and very swanky world map and the choice of automatic or manual camera controls, which should hopefully make it easier to see where your cartoon critter is going. The jury's still out on that one, though.

Q: *Sonic Adventure 2 Battle* had GBA link-up features where you could pass Chaos to the portable machine. Are there any link-up options in this?

A: *Sonic Adventure DX Director's Cut* has all the Chao link-up feature of the previous adventure. It will be possible to pass Chaos into the three GBA Sonic games, those being *Sonic Advance 1* and *2*, and *Sonic Pinball Party*. Any other link-up features, particularly with *Pinball Party*, are yet to be confirmed, but are possible.

Q: *Sonic* games can sometimes be a little short. I finished *Sonic Advance 2 Battle* the day after I got it. How long does this take to beat?

A: This should keep you busy much longer than a day. There are ten action stages in Sonic's adventure alone. On top of that, each of the six characters has their own adventures and there are mondo goodies to be earned if you finish them all, so you won't want to stop until you do.

SIX ADVENTURES IN ONE

Where *Sonic Adventure 2 Battle* allowed you to play as Sonic and the gang in one big quest, in *Sonic DX*, each character has their own adventures, with different levels, routes and plots to the others.

While Sonic and Tails' levels just involve speeding to the end, Amy with her hammer and E-102 Y's levels involve more battling, and Knuckles has to dig around to find buried Emeralds using a bleeping radar.

But the most original of them all is Big the Cat and his quest to retrieve his stolen pet frog. To do this he must hook the little green hopper out of fish-filled waters. Yes, fishing! So if you fancy a break from all the speed and roaring around like a mad hedgehog, play as Big the Cat and hook some big ones.

Fishing?! In a *Sonic* game? Yeah, that's what we thought – but it makes a change from the running

The levels featuring Sonic and Tails are all about speed. Well, what else did you expect?

This is E-102 Y. Try telling that to some lady robot when you're full of extra-strong oil

MORE THAN JUST A RUNNER

This *NiGHTS* table is sure to please old-skool Sega fans and makes a change from all the running about

Sonic is a fast runner. Everybody knows that. He does that in all of his games. But *Sonic Adventure DX* occasionally tests the blue hero's skills in other ways.

In the Casino stage, Sonic will need to earn Rings in a pinball game and old-skool Sega fans will love the *NiGHTS* table. You'll also get to storm along in a bumper car on the Twinkle Park level in a fast-paced race to a theme park. You will even get to try your hand at snowboarding, when Sonic is caught in a ferocious avalanche and is forced to flee down the side of a snowy mountain.

However, the best thing is that, once you've played these sections in the main adventure, you'll be able to replay them again and again in *Sonic DX*'s Trial mode.

It's a bumper car – check the seat for chewing gum

This is a secret *NiGHTS* extra that you might find

"NOM OPINION"

Sonic Adventure DX is already looking and playing better than Sonic's first GameCube outing. It's not without its faults, particularly with the camera, but we still think this is a *Sonic* game to get excited about.

ENTER THE MATRIX

NINTENDO GAMECUBE

LOG ON

www.enterthematrix.com

IN BRIEF

Take on the role of either ship captain, Niobe, or martial arts warrior, Ghost, as you battle against the machines in a story line that'll run parallel with the recently released *The Matrix Reloaded*.

DETAILS

Release
Out Now

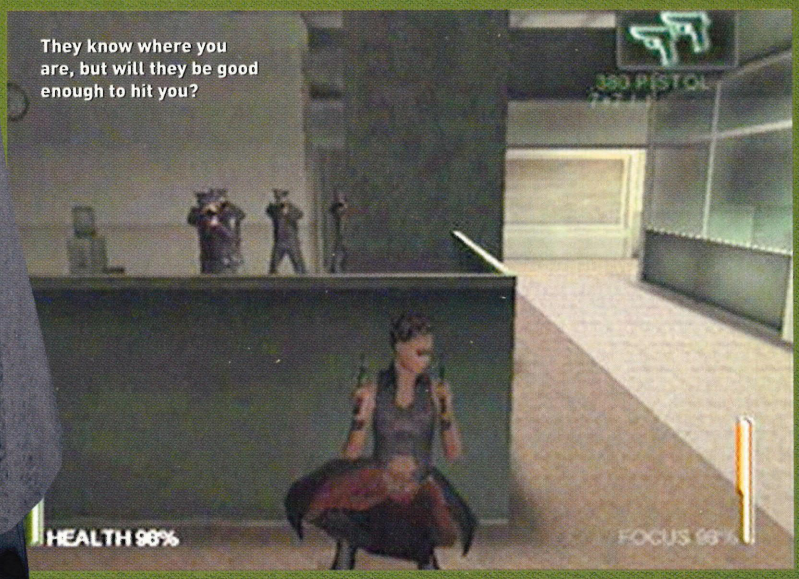
Developer
Shiny Entertainment

Publisher
Atari

Game Genre
Action Adventure

Guns? Check. Kung fu? Check. Bullet-Time? Check. Better than most movie tie-ins. Ummm...

Ever since the release of *The Matrix*, gamers everywhere have marvelled at the thought of living it out on screen. And rightly so, it has enough action and story concepts to make the most awesome game imaginable. This month its sequel, *The Matrix Reloaded*, is storming into cinemas, with the long-awaited game getting a simultaneous release. *NOM* has had sneak peaks at earlier builds of the game, but shortly before its release we were given the chance to have a more extensive play on a near-finished version.



They know where you are, but will they be good enough to hit you?

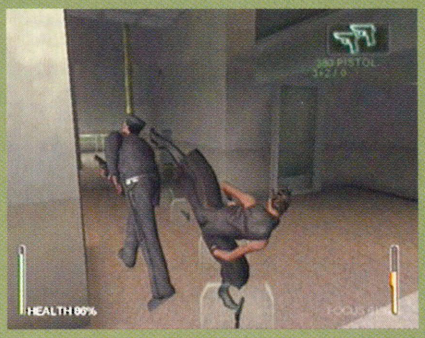
WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Q: Bullet-Time in the *Matrix* movies is cool. How does the effect work in the game?
A: Hit Z to activate Bullet-Time and the game will start to run in slow motion, making it possible to block attacks, dodge bullets and run up walls. While this looks cool, most of these abilities are triggered automatically, so you aren't in total control of your character.

Q: I'm a big fan of *The Matrix* and am dying to find out the plot. What's the story *NOM*?
A: As we said above the game's plot runs extremely close to that of the film, occasionally crossing over at particular scenes. To conceal the film's plot, no-one was allowed to know exactly what happens in the game. So, while we've played many levels, we've no idea what role they play in the story.

Q: The game is already out in the shops, so why hasn't *NOM* done a full review?
A: Quite simply, we weren't allowed. When we went hands-on with the near-finished game, none of the real, acted cut-scenes were there and it was held back until the last minute to conceal the film's plot. Due to this, the game was deemed incomplete and we weren't able to review it. Check out our definitive score next month.

Weird. Some prisoner of the Agents, perhaps?

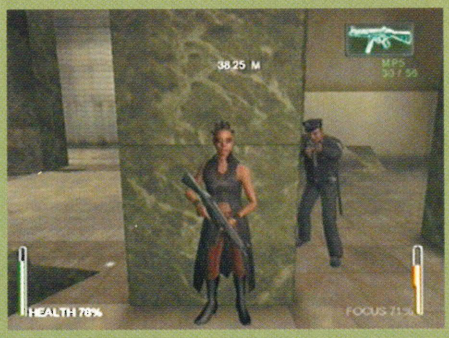


Kicks hurt even more when you've got heels on

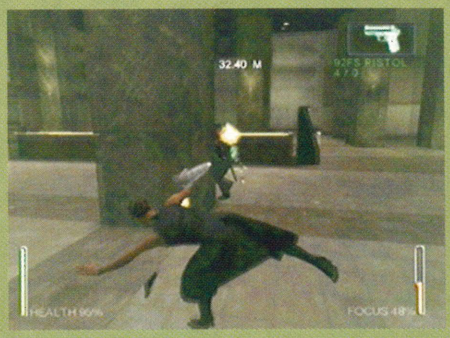
WE NEED GUNS, LOTS OF GUNS

Although the game is related more closely to *The Matrix Reloaded*, you'll recognise some scenes from the first *Matrix* film, like the classic gun-fight scene in the foyer of the government building.

Guards will charge into the room and hide behind pillars, and you've simply got to shoot them all. It may sound awesome, but from the version we saw we would have liked there to be more guards to recreate the true mayhem of the original scene. The guards just didn't seem to be working together in strategic formation as they do in *The Matrix*.



Niobe waits smugly for the oncoming security guard, unaware that he can see her in a mirror



Hey! She stole Neo and Trinity's moves. Still, with a gun that big, who's going to argue with her?

OI, YOU! OUTSIDE, NOW!

Go on, do what the omniscient green text says, dummy. Where's the freedom of action here?

Niobe has a go at levitating the agent. Quit screwing around and kick him in the chops, girl

Face resistance from normal human guards and you can quite easily see them off with a shower of bullets to the chest, but come across an Agent and you've got a problem.

Agents cannot be killed. So, each time you meet one, you'll either have to escape, or outsmart him in another way. In the Airport level, you'll have to smack an Agent off the back of a flying plane. An interesting scenario, we think you'll agree, but the stiffness with which the characters fight and the randomness of the moves make for a sloppy combat system that spoils such potentially great scenes.

SUNDAY DRIVE

To add variety to the gameplay, you'll also be able to jump behind the wheel of a motor in a few driving stages.

We played two of these stages, the better of which was in a city at night. We had to take a short drive to a bridge that was raised, chased by some not-so-challenging Agent cars. After waiting around for a while, the bridge dropped and once we were across, it was over. Not the most exciting of levels we've ever played, we're sure you'll agree. The car physics are not as tight as we'd expect and the scenery is very bland. We think these screens will show how little there is going on in this level. It's not exactly action-packed or a *Burnout*-beater.

The driving sections in *Enter The Matrix* aren't exactly *Burnout*-beaters

"NOM OPINION"

The earlier version of *Enter The Matrix* we saw was a bit rough around the edges and a month on it's still rough around the edges. Now it's out and it seems nothing has improved. You'll get a verdict on this next issue.

XIII

If you robbed San Francisco's Dirty Harry Callaghan of his memory and stuck him in a video game, we reckon the outcome would be pretty much like this. It's a big, fat slice of cartoon shooter heaven.

NINTENDO GAMECUBE

LOG ON

www.ubi.com

IN BRIEF

The most unique-looking First Person Shooter to appear on GameCube, *XIII* draws inspiration from a classic Belgian comic book series to bring you a stylish and cool shooting experience.

DETAILS

Release
September

Developer
Ubi Soft

Publisher
Ubi Soft

Game Genre
First Person Shooter

Come on, you'll never blow up a whole submarine with that pea-shooter

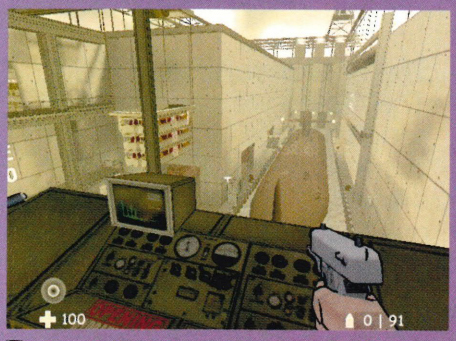
You wake up on a beach, somewhere in the middle of nowhere. The president of the USA is dead – assassinated – and you're the prime suspect. But you have no memory of your past.

Unsurprisingly you also find out that the whole of the FBI is on your tail, along with a strange and shadowy organisation called Mongoose. Your only identifying mark is a XIII tattoo on your chest, so keep your shirt on if you want to stay out of trouble.

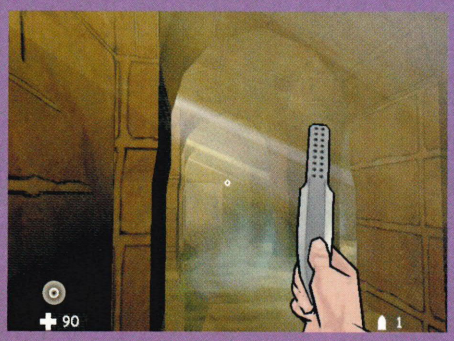
Based around a classic Belgian comic book series, *XIII* is a First Person Shooter that looks just like an issue of your favourite comic. We got the chance to go hands-on with some incredibly early code to see what this baby is promising to offer and we weren't disappointed.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Q: I'm impatient and can't be bothered to read the rest of this article, so please tell me straight away, who or what is XIII?
A: Cool your boots, man. XIII is you. The game is based around a classic Belgian comic book of the same name. What the developers have tried to do is take inspiration from the – now outdated – comic and bring it bang up to date with a cool cel-shaded look.



Shoot the buttons or press them. What a dilemma



Stainless steel cutlery is all the rage you know

Q: There seem to be a lot of different weapons you can use. Any others that aren't in the screenshots?
A: Yes there are. The list includes shovels, bricks, chairs, bottles, glass shards and ashtrays – all available for you to pick up and use as weapons. From then on in it's your choice of whether to whack an opponent over the head with them, or hurl them at some chump from a distance.

Q: So it's based on a comic, eh? Will there be boxes all over the screen?
A: As *XIII* takes its inspiration from the world of comic books, the developers are keen to be true to that genre throughout. New developments are relayed to you via the medium of pop-up boxes.

I'LL TAKE IT

An FPS is nothing without weapons and, of course, *XIII* has those in abundance. Each gun has a primary and secondary function and you must also steal weapons from enemies you've killed in order to keep your ammo supply up and your selection of tools broad.

The game also features object weapons, eight in total. Harmless-looking items they may be, but bricks, bottles and chairs can be picked up and used on the enemy. They're single-use weapons so you'll certainly need to think about how to use them most effectively.

No, cartoon soldier, come back the other way so I can fill you full of hot lead. You'll like it, honest

Down in the sewers, XIII tries to shoot flies with his Uzi. This is a waste of time, so don't try it at home

INTO THE COMIC BOOK

The game begins with you washed up on a beach. Helped into a nearby hut by a friendly woman you regain consciousness in time to see your saviour shot and the building surrounded. You're initially unarmed, but a quick ferret around the shack soon reveals some knives and a handgun, just in time to turn around and take out the approaching attacker and steal his gun. We took a tentative step outside and downed another attacker on the doorstep.

It really feels like you're inside a comic book, as each enemy bites the dust they let out a visible 'Aaah' or 'Uggh' for you to enjoy, and you're alerted to new developments by several small boxes popping up on the screen.

The second level we played took place in a dam facility where you have to listen-in on a conversation and pick up info. Here you get to use a grappling hook and get close to the enemy. The comic book style is reinforced with the conversations between enemy guards taking place inside speech bubbles. You also get to use a smart long-range sniper crossbow to eliminate bad guys.

The final level we played sees us trying to protect a key witness, Carrington, as we escaped from a snowy prison facility. Here, grenades come into play and there's a clever little trick that lets you flick the pin and then hold onto the grenade while the timer counts down, so you can judge your attacks depending on where your enemies are positioned.

Standing around in a white jumpsuit is just asking for trouble. Shoot his feet first and work your way up

Pretty much any game that includes a fat rocket launcher is alright by us – but this is mondo coolo

Y-e-s! There's no arguing about it. We shoot you. You fall over. We don't send flowers. End of story, pal

"NOM OPINION"

It'd be easy to dismiss *XIII* as just another FPS and there's very little in here that you haven't seen elsewhere. But *XIII* certainly does things in style. The in-depth story line and weapon management elements mean that this may be the thinking-man's shooter.

V-RALLY 3

NINTENDO GAMECUBE

Fancy yourself as the next Richard Burns? You'll need to pass this acid test before they'll even let you near a real rally car.

LOG ON

www.v-rally.com

IN BRIEF

This is the version where the series grows up. Featuring a fully-fledged Career mode and some seriously twitchy handling, *V-Rally 3* could be the driving game to test you to your limits.

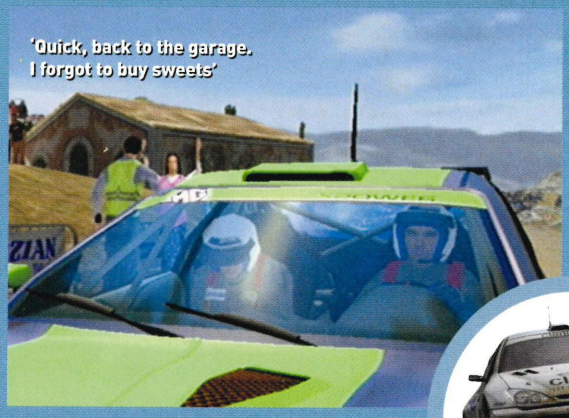
DETAILS

Release
June

Developer
Atari

Publisher
Infogrames

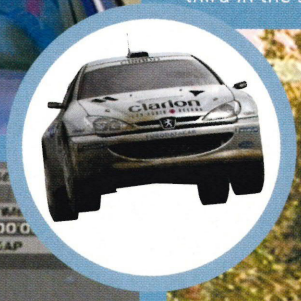
Game Genre
Rally Driving

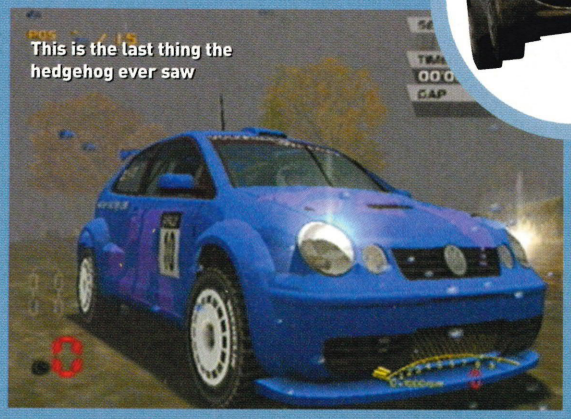

'Quick, back to the garage. I forgot to buy sweets'

The *V-Rally* series of games has been around for years – the original title appearing way back on the PSone – and they're renowned for their arcade-style rally action that puts fun above facts.

But *V-Rally 3* is an altogether different beast. The emphasis here is definitely on real-world physics, with twitchy handling and a gamut of tuning options that can affect the whole feel of your motor.

We got our hands on a preview version of this, the third in the series, to see how it's shaping up.

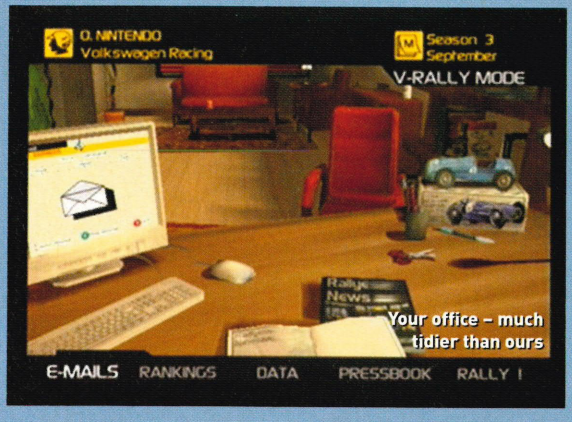



This is the last thing the hedgehog ever saw

One false move and over the precipice you go

CHOOSE LIFE, CHOOSE A CAREER

The V-Rally mode couldn't be more realistic if it tried. You take on the role of a rookie driver, hungry for a contract. The first thing you see is your office, complete with e-mail system. From here you can take a look at some of the offers that have come your way from the likes of Volkswagen, MG and Renault. They will then give you a test to complete; finishing a rally stage in a specific time, for example. Only if you're successful will you be allowed into the rally proper, making sure you complete the team's goals if you want them to offer a new deal.



Your office – much tidier than ours

The roads are always empty on Christmas Day

THE DRIVING EXPERIENCE

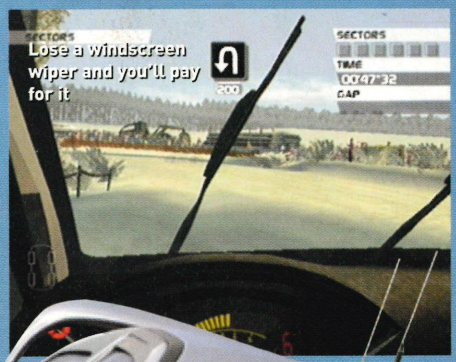
We got stuck into the Career mode straight from the off. After creating a driver and altering their appearance and nationality, we went to our PC to check for any e-mails. We opted for a test drive with Volkswagen, which we eventually passed – after failure with MG – and signed a contract for the Germans.

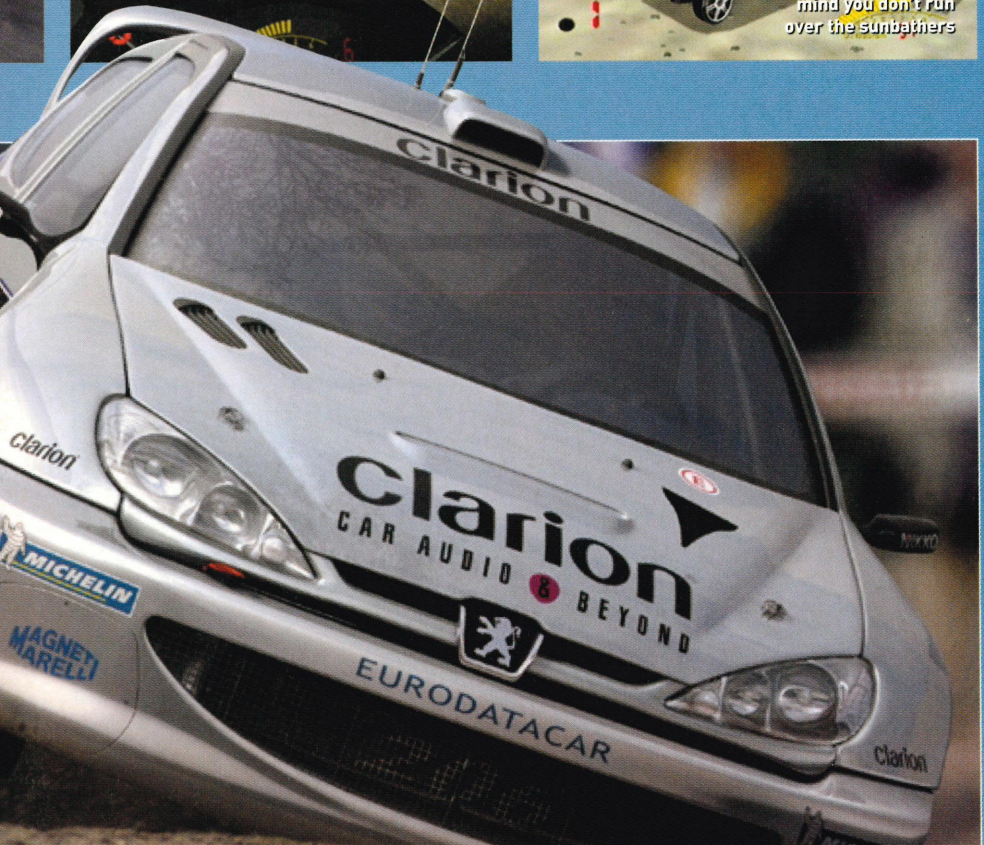
To start with, our Polo handled like a balloon, but after a quick rummage through the options we turned down the steering sensitivity, making things a little better. From here on in we tried desperately to improve our driving skills and after three seasons in the lowest class, we managed to get somewhere and were actually enjoying it.

It's definitely a tough game, but the Career mode really pushes you along and you become eager to beat your team-mate and please the bosses. We eventually get offers for test drives in improved Renault and Ford motors, but sadly weren't yet good enough to race with the big boys and had to sign for VW again.

It certainly looks beautiful from high up here...

... but the in-car view is where the real action is



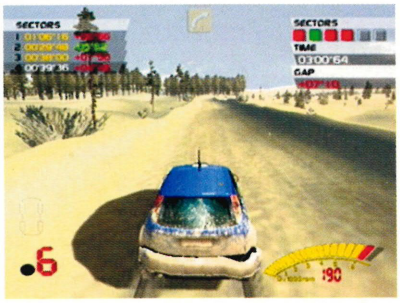


WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Q. Is the Career stuff just a gimmick or an integral part of the game?
A. It's certainly no gimmick, we reckon it's a great idea. If you want to get straight into the action you can go for a simple Quick Race and choose some of the more powerful cars, but the Career mode is the meat of the game and it will last you ages.

Q. Please tell me there are some fast cars in there.
A. Of course there are: fully licensed pedigree beasts like the Subaru and Mitsubishi. If you've got mad rallying skills then you can drive them straight away, but otherwise you'll fail, because these cars are insane.

Q. Can you smash them up, just like in the *Burnout* games?
A. Yes, but you don't want to try it. If you damage your car on a stage that doesn't have a Service Centre at the end you'll need to limp through the next stage to get it fixed. Many a time we somehow trundled over the line with three wheels and no brakes.



The basics: when driving on snow, go as fast as possible – it's much safer that way

"NOM OPINION"

Tough, challenging, slightly annoying, yet strangely compelling in a masochistic sort of way, *V-Rally 3* is a hard nut to crack. We'd like to see some alterations to the handling, but the Career mode is inspired and should keep you interested.

VIEWTIFUL JOE

When your girlfriend is kidnapped by a gang of movie monsters, what's a boy to do? Head on in and get fighting, that's what.

NINTENDO GAMECUBE

LOG ON

www.capcom.com

IN BRIEF

When his girlfriend is kidnapped through a movie screen by a gang of film villains, Joe has no choice but to follow her through and attempt a rescue. But what awaits him on the other side?

DETAILS

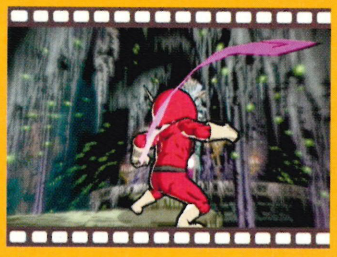
Release
September

Developer
Capcom

Publisher
Capcom

Game Genre
Platform beat-'em-up

Games just aren't tough enough anymore. It's a fact. Gone are the days of sitting in front of your TV for hours trying desperately to defeat that huge boss or jump that enormous gap. But if you yearn for a return to the days of blistered thumbs, split-second timing and wasting a whole weekend trying to get past level two then *Viewtiful Joe* is the game for you.



Cut-scenes and in-game graphics...

... are almost identical – that's cool

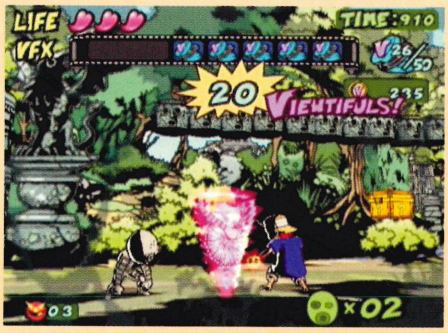
Motion blurs add pace to the game

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

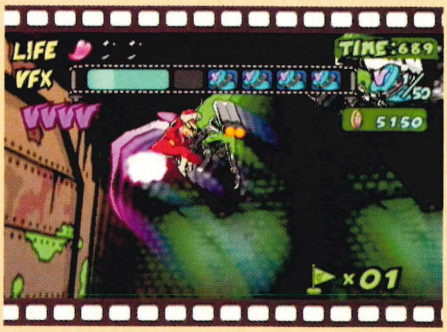
Q: It all looks really cool, but a bit on the confusing side. Firstly, what's a Viewtiful?
A: Viewtifuls are the blue cans of film that litter the sumptuous cartoon-style levels. Joe has to collect these cans to keep his superpowers in full flow. If his powers fail him then he stops being Viewtiful Joe and returns to plain old man-in-the-street Joe. And that's bad news for your quest.

Q: Oh, does that mean he's not a superhero right at the start then?
A: Absolutely correct. At the beginning of the game, Joe is just plain Joe, a normal kid whose girlfriend is kidnapped by a gang of nasty movie monsters. It's only later that Joe learns the skills he needs to become Viewtiful, gaining the power to get his girl back from the monsters.

Q: Ahhh, is that who the crusty little guy in blue is then, Joe's tutor in the ways of the superhero?
A: Right again, you're really good at this. The old superhero guy is called Captain Blue, Joe's all-time favourite character from the movies. He pops up from time to time during the game – usually at the end of a level – and teaches Joe some new skills, so don't ignore him like most old people.



Early on, Joe has no superpowers to help him...

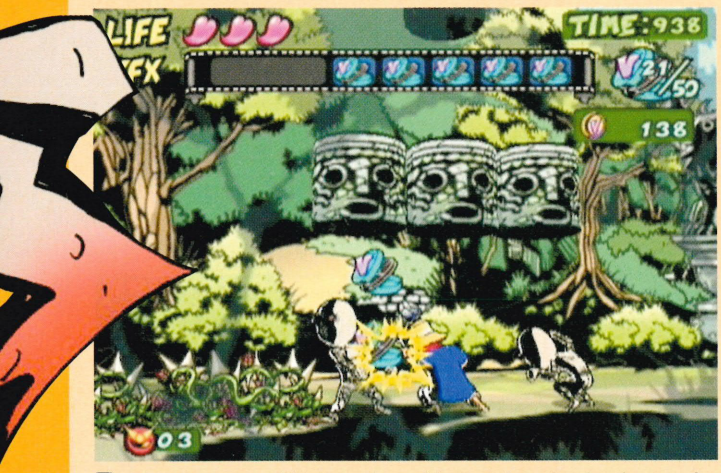


... but that changes when he becomes Viewtiful

WHO AM I?

The story goes that Joe is enjoying a film with his girlfriend when a gang of movie monsters burst through the screen and kidnap her. His only option is to follow the beasts and try and get her back, but that's going to be tough.

On the first level, Joe is an ordinary pleb, he can only kick and punch, duck and jump. You have to guide him through with no superpowers – only then can you become Viewtiful.



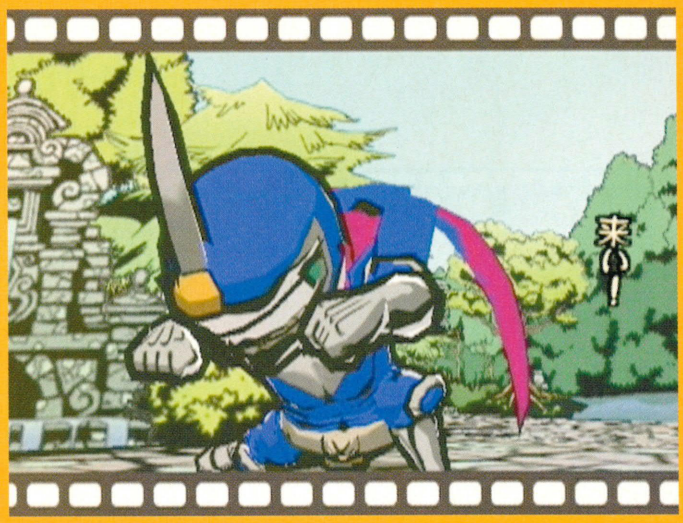
No platformer would be complete without an Aztec level – nice one, Joe

OLD BLUE EYES

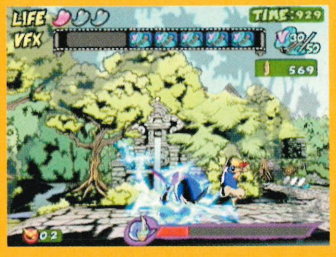
Joe's ultimate superhero is Captain Blue, an ancient crime fighter from the days of yore. He understands Joe's plight and wants to help in the best way he can; by giving our hero some superpowers, aiding him in his girlfriend-saving quest.

The trouble is, the mean old gipper isn't just going to hand them over, oh no. It's never that easy, is it? To get your hands on the all-important superpowers you'll have to kick his wrinkled ass into the middle of next week.

Each time you meet Blue, usually at the end of a level, you'll need to face off against him and claim the superpower spoils. Only then will you get access to new abilities.



Captain Blue stops to find his contact lens, allowing Joe the perfect opportunity to nip in and steal his pension book. Come on, we've all done it...



You'll have to beat the old man to gain more superpowers for Joe

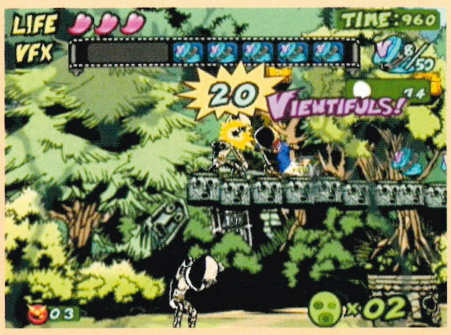
'Eat that with your dentures'. Joe and the old gipper mash it up outside

Q: You've said *Viewtiful Joe* is a real test of skill. What do you mean? Can it really be all that hard?

A: It's all down to the fact that Joe's attacks are based on perfect timing. What this means is that you can bludgeon your way through the levels using only the most basic attacks, but you won't score many points. And if you don't get better you won't last very long on the later stages.

Q: So there are plenty of enemy attacks to memorise?

A: There sure are and you'll need to learn fast if you want to stand any chance of survival in Joe's cartoon world.



Pick up the Viewtifuls to keep your energy up...

... that way you can kick-off superhero style

One for the cameras – that Joe is such a poser

SLOW, SLOW, QUICK, QUICK, SLOW

What's a superhero without superpowers? Nothing, he's a nobody. Luckily Joe's got some skills, three of them in fact, all taught to you by your spandex-clad mentor Captain Blue. Why not take a closer look at Joe's different superpowers below?

SLOW DOWN

The first skill you learn is how to slow down the action, a bit like Bullet-Time in the slo-mo-tastic *Matrix* movies. By holding L, Joe can reduce his opponents to a gang of slow-moving half-wits, allowing him to batter them senseless with ease.

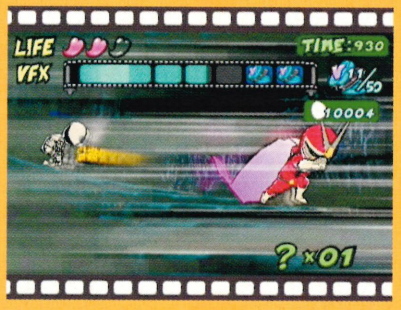
This skill is also used to complete some of the game's numerous puzzles, like slowing down the action to create a huge drip of water that will flick a switch and open up a new route.

Slow Down makes time crawl, allowing for some *Matrix*-style Bullet-Time action

SPEED UP

If fast action is more your thing then Joe can do that as well. Hold down the R button and things get mighty hairy. Joe's movement is now accompanied by some gob-smacking motion-blur effects and trails of light shoot out from the hero, manga style.

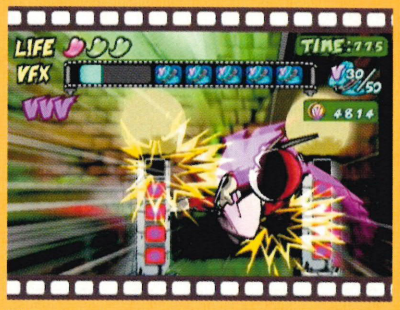
When Joe attacks, his punches and kicks are so vicious that he actually ignites his enemies. So, if you fancy the smell of barbecued bad guy, this is sure to be your favourite move.



Use the Speed Up skill and things get very manga indeed – check out those speed lines

ZOOM IN

The final skill that Joe learns is the ability to zoom right in on the action. Once you've attained the new skill, pressing B will give you a macro-lens close-up of what's going on. But that's not all. At the same time, Zoom In accentuates all of Joe's attacks, making him ultra-hard. In fact, Joe's attacks are so beefed-up by this super skill that he can smash his way through floors and ceilings to find new areas. Very handy if you're in a tight spot.



Zoom In increases the damage you can do. This is handy for... smashing stuff up and so on

TIMING IS OF THE ESSENCE

What makes Joe so replayable and skilful is the ability to dodge enemy attacks and return fire with a vengeance, thus racking up enormous scores. By pushing ↑ or ↓ at the right time Joe will jump or duck an attack and a 'Slow' icon will appear. Hit L and the enemy becomes a sitting duck just waiting for you to unleash a one-hit kill that can take out masses of enemies.

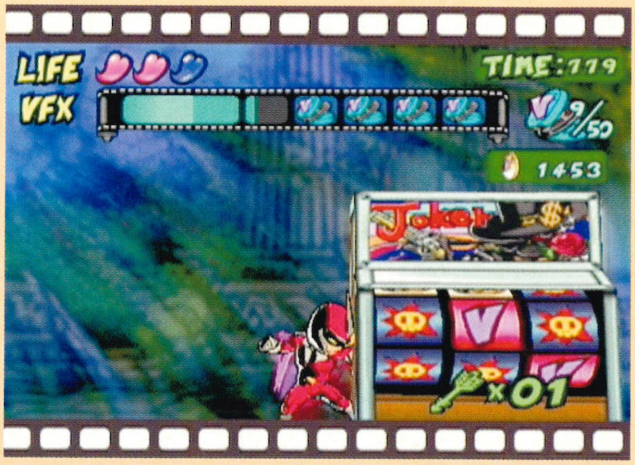
Some of the later enemies require you to time the use of your Slow Down skills to avoid bullets and then punch them back at your enemies. *Viewtiful Joe* will have you concentrating on the screen like a gamer possessed.

These ballet-dancing bad guys are no match for our boy, Viewtiful Joe

LET ME THINK

Not only is *Viewtiful Joe* an exciting beat-'em-up, it also contains many brain-bending puzzles that utilise Joe's superpowers to the maximum. If a doorway is blocked or a platform is out of reach you can't just smash your way through or jump higher, you really have to think about how to progress.

On one occasion your path is blocked by a large barrel which you must punch into the air and then use Speed Up to dash underneath. Later you have to use the Zoom In ability, allowing you to hit two beacons simultaneously and open a door. These puzzle elements will keep you on your toes.



All this and fruit machines, too? *Viewtiful Joe* looks like having it all

THE FIRST TWO HOURS

The first word that springs to mind when you fire up *Viewtiful Joe* is manic. The game looks just like a cartoon or a comic book and the levels are extremely detailed and very cleverly designed.

We started out as Joe, a regular kid out to rescue his girlfriend, and were taught how to punch, kick and dodge attacks. The first few enemies were soon disposed of and we collected a good number of Viewtifuls, the cans of film that eventually increase Joe's superpowers.

At the end of the first, very short, stage we met Captain Blue who challenged us to a battle. Once defeated, he gave Joe the powers he needed to become Viewtiful and we learnt how to slow the action down.

It's important to keep collecting the Viewtifuls as they increase your superhero bar and allow you to use Joe's powers for longer. If they run out then you return to being ordinary Joe and he's not a lot of use in a tough fight.

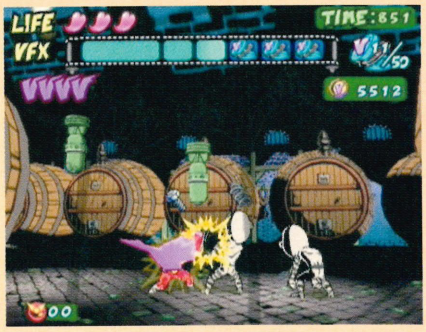
By the second stage we were getting the hang of dodging the enemy attacks and were racking up hefty scores by completing combos. But the enemies were coming thicker and faster.

The first proper boss we encounter was a huge Apache helicopter armed with machine guns and homing missiles, but a judicious bit of Slow Down skill and we were on our way again. It's clear that the superpowers aren't just gimmicks, they are absolutely vital to completing the levels.

There's a definite learning curve to the game as well. You won't complete every stage at the first attempt – it's just not humanly possible.

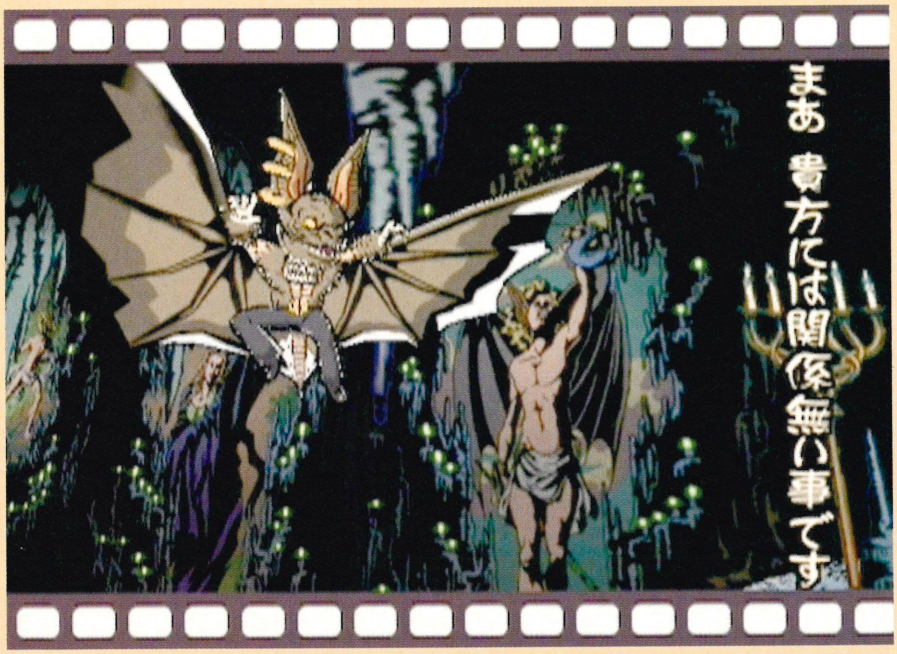
To progress you'll need to learn and memorise the attack patterns and then start again with your new-found knowledge. There will be plenty of head scratching and a few eureka moments before you get too far.

❑ Apache gunships are usually the gun-toting daddy, but not when you get Viewtiful on their ass



❑ Those Yanks will bomb anything. Keep slugging, but make sure you dodge the ordnance

❑ Ka-Blasto-Whack! Joe gets medieval on the scenery, thanks to his new superpowers



❑ The bad guys in *Viewtiful Joe* look just as good as the rest of the game. We're in comic book heaven

❑ This weird magician-type chap is the first big bad guy you'll come across. Watch out for the hat

❑ Smash-o! Hit these ornate levers to open up new areas for Viewtiful Joe to kick ass in

"NOM OPINION"

The few hours we spent with *Viewtiful Joe* left us drained and yearning for just one more go. This game requires the skill and timing of a concert pianist. We need more time to delve deeper into Joe's world, but from this brief look, Capcom is shaping up to be a worthy partner for Nintendo.

NINTENDO GAMECUBE

BEYOND GOOD AND EVIL

Strange title, interesting concept, French team doing the development; it might just work, guys.

LOG ON

www.ubi.com

IN BRIEF

Jade's planet is under constant attack from the Hos, a cruel race of flying creatures. The Alpha Section are sent to protect the people against invasion, but all is not as it seems. Jade sets off on a mission to uncover a dark conspiracy and find out what's really going on.

DETAILS

Release
September

Developer
Ubi Soft

Publisher
Ubi Soft

Game Genre
Action Adventure

If you'd worked on *Rayman* games for ages then you'd fancy a break and that's just what Michel Ancel and his team have been doing – for three years. *Beyond Good and Evil* is a third-person adventure title in which you take on the role of Jade, an intrepid journalist trying to keep her head above water and the electricity on in her small home town.

But after a call from a strange billionaire and a Tutorial mini-quest, it soon becomes clear that Jade's skills are about to be put to the ultimate test. Only by uncovering the secrets of the planet's police force and rumbling the strange undercover goings on will you and your friends be able to rest easy. You're the only hope, Jade.

The design seems to owe a bit to French artist Moebius – that can only be good

Killer whales, spaceships, strange lights in the sky... *Beyond Good and Evil* looks like a strange brew

The game certainly looks beautiful, but will the French know what makes an English gamer tick?

SAY CHEESE

Jade works for Jade Reporting & Co. – she owns it, in fact – and as an investigative journalist she sports a camera. The camera serves many purposes and it can initially be used to snap the wildlife of the area in return for some precious cash.

But later in the game you'll need to infiltrate an enemy base and use the camera to collect evidence of an evil plot. You'll also get a Camera upgrade that allows you to use it as a weapon. Bet you can't get one of those down the high street.

This handsome chap is Pey'j, an enormous talking pig that joins up with Jade to fight the alien invaders

THE FIRST TWO HOURS

Jade is sitting watching the sunset when her view is interrupted by a streak of green light. An evil force is invading her planet. She rushes to her house only to find that her friends have been imprisoned. Grabbing the nearest thing to hand, a flaming stick, she battles the baddies and frees her friends only to be captured herself. Pey'j, a huge pig, comes to her rescue and Jade escapes the clutches of the enemy, but then passes out.

The power in Hyllis, Jade's town, is out and they have no money. The only way they can make cash is to photograph examples of animals that inhabit the area and send them to the Director of the Science Centre. After snapping our pet polar bear, a bug, a Rock Armadillo and a swarm of fireflies we amassed enough funds to get the power back on and start up the shield generator.

We headed down to Pey'j's workshop and picked up a message from M. de Castellac. We jumped in a hovercraft and set off, but only got about 200 yards before it blew up. Luckily we were towed to the garage where we bought an engine upgrade. Back outside we came under attack from a sea monster.

On de Castellac's island we were told to head into the old mines and take a picture of a monster. You'll need to work closely with Pey'j to progress and after some clever brainwork, involving Pey'j's fart-powered jet boots, we finally found the animal that de Castellac was after and snapped it. It obviously didn't enjoy having its picture taken and attacked. We couldn't target the thing very well, but we soon learnt its pattern of attack and dished out some rough justice. De Castellac's chauffeur appeared, only to tell us that the main man didn't really exist and that this whole mini-quest was a situation test to see if we were capable of fighting for SPOON, an anti-government agency.

Using our extensive knowledge of video games and unrivalled experience we can tell you that this situation does not look good for Jade and Pey'j

This big fella is straight out of *Eternal Darkness*

The intriguing *Beyond Good and Evil* is, by turns, cartoony...

... then simply stunning, with lovely reflective water effects...

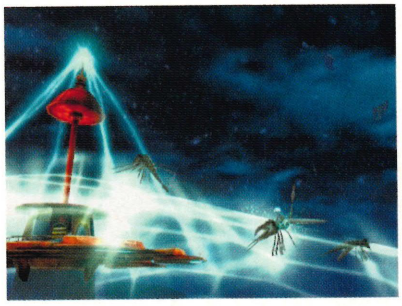
... and then totally far-out in a *Space Harrier* kind of way. Cool

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Q. So, what's with the title?
A. Some things are good, some things are evil. But some things are utterly indescribable, they go beyond the realms of human comprehension – quite simply beyond good and evil. In this game you will learn what this horror is. The worst type of horror.

Q. Is that a camera I see?
A. Yes it is. Jade is an investigative reporter and she uses the camera to snap rare animals, scope out situations and, later on, to take out enemies and uncover the dark plot hatched by the enemy.

Q. The world looks pretty big, can you get up to anything apart from the main adventure?
A. Mais oui, certainment! As well as the main quest there are loads of mini-quests and games you can embark upon. There's a game of air hockey in the pub, a hide-the-ball-under-the-cups game and a race league where you get to thrash your hovercraft around the twisty town circuits.

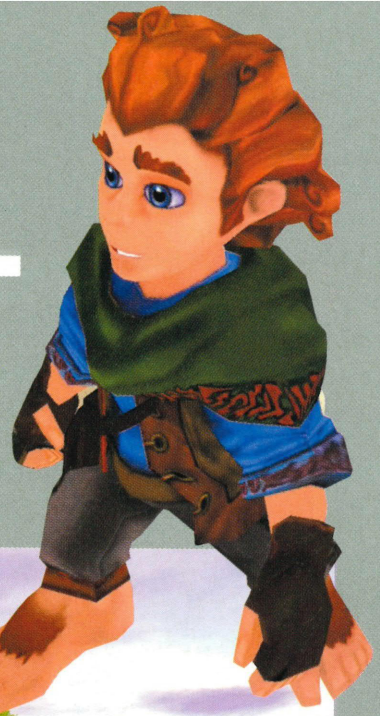


The invaders are all spiky and horrible, not how we'd imagine evil aliens at all

"NOM OPINION"

BG&E is shaping up to be a competent adventure game with a clever story line and some excellent puzzles. The camera is an interesting inclusion and allows the opportunity for some clever elements. This should stand out come September.

THE HOBBIT



Hobbits may be less than five feet tall, but Bilbo Baggins has the courage of a concrete elephant and is kicking goblin ass on GameCube and GBA.

NINTENDO GAMECUBE

GAME BOY ADVANCE

LOG ON

www.vugames.com

IN BRIEF

Bilbo, Gandalf and a gang of dwarves make their way to the Lonely Mountain to face Smaug, a giant dragon that's nicked all the dwarves' treasure.

DETAILS

Release **September**

Developer **Inevitable**

Publisher **Vivendi**

Game Genre **Platforming Adventure**

If you'd never heard of hobbits before the *Lord of the Rings* movies, you may not be aware that there was an adventurous hobbit long before Frodo. The story was *The Hobbit* and Bilbo Baggins was the hero.

There may not be a film about this book yet, but this September there's the game for GameCube. *The Hobbit* sees Bilbo join Gandalf and a gang of dwarves on a treasure-hunting adventure as they seek the dragon Smaug who's collected a hoard of dwarven booty in his lair under The Lonely Mountain. Knowing that Bilbo is a handy hobbit to have around, Gandalf and the dwarves go to his house and persuade him to join them on their quest.

Sticking close to the book, the game will allow you to explore many different areas, including the Forest of Mirkwood. Wherever you may be, the emphasis is on exploration – you'll miss stuff if you don't look around.

Ahhh, The Shire and it's just as beautiful as you'd have hoped – what's more, it's before the days of Sam Gamgee, so he won't be around to annoy you

The gang's all here – Bilbo, Gandalf and some short fat blokes with beards

Trolls, eh? Just be thankful you can't smell them through your television

This guy's got trouble written all over him, but if he can't see you, he can't hit you

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Q: Will you be given a choice of playable characters like in *The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers*?

A: Unfortunately not, my Tolkien-obsessed friend. It might have been cool to play as Gandalf and explore with his magical powers, but in this game you'll only get to play as the hairy-footed Bilbo Baggins.

Q: You mentioned in the 'Weapons of a Hobbit' box that you could earn new moves as you progress through Bilbo's adventure. How does that work?

A: If you explore every corner of a level you'll discover hidden scrolls. After collecting them, you'll get a new move, such as the ability to swipe your sword faster or even a new, more powerful jump-swipe combo that'll leave your enemies in little pieces.

Q: When you put on the Ring, will you be traced by the Eye of Sauron like in the blockbuster films?

A: No. There's no Eye of Sauron in *The Hobbit* and wearing the Ring in this game is much safer. If you've read Tolkien's books you'll know that the Eye of Sauron doesn't appear until *The Fellowship of the Ring*.

Feeling supersonic? With eyebrows like that, we reckon Mr Baggins could join Oasis straight away

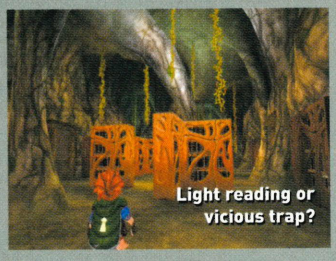
Looks like there's going to be some puzzling action here – you'd better engage the grey matter

WEAPONS OF A HOBBIT

The Ring isn't the only tool that Bilbo can use. From the very start of the game, he'll be able to pick up stones to throw, either as weapons or to hit objects like explosive barrels. He also has a stick that can be used to attack enemies and do a pole vault-style jump.

But Bilbo's best weapon is his magical sword, Sting. Bilbo acquires this weapon a short way into his adventure and can then use it to defeat more powerful enemies. However, unlike any ordinary sword Sting glows with energy when Goblins are close. Seeing as the game is packed with Goblins, Sting glows almost constantly and can be used to light your way through dark caves and other such lightless areas.

Enormous spider webs and small humanoids don't mix – if Bilbo gets stuck in here, he'll be some lucky spider's lunch



THE PORTABLE HOBBIT

The GBA will also be getting its share of *Hobbit* pie. *The Hobbit* on the GBA will be an action RPG adventure, following the plot of the book and starring all the same characters as the GameCube title.

Not unlike *Zelda: A Link to the Past*, you'll have an inventory, where you assign items to certain buttons. Bilbo will climb platforms and jump automatically, also comparable to *Zelda*. Although battles take place in real time, we found the puzzles and worlds to be similar to *Golden Sun*, only a lot simpler. This could be a huge quest for your portable and well suited for anyone who found *Golden Sun* too difficult. We'll review it soon.

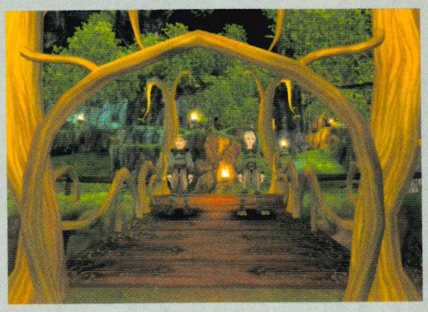
Bilbo opened every packet of cornflakes and still couldn't find the cheap plastic toy he wanted

THE ONE RING

The Hobbit aims to be more than an average platform game by implementing a stealth system revolving around the Ring. Slipping on the Ring will make you temporarily invisible to enemies.

You can't use this ability all the time though as your energy bar will quickly empty, forcing you to remove the Ring and become visible. What's more, you can't attack while wearing the Ring, so forget about trying to be the invisible assassin. This forces you to make the tactical decision of whether to sneak past enemies quickly with the Ring on, or charge in and fight, saving your energy for later. Also, some enemies use sound to detect you rather than sight so the Ring will be useless unless you're very quiet.

Trolls are keen on rain, but not fond of sunlight



Elves are keen on topiary and nail varnish

"NOM OPINION"

With large worlds to explore and simple controls, this looks like it could be an entertaining platformer for younger Nintendo gamers. But we'll have to wait and see before we tell you to spend all your gold on it.

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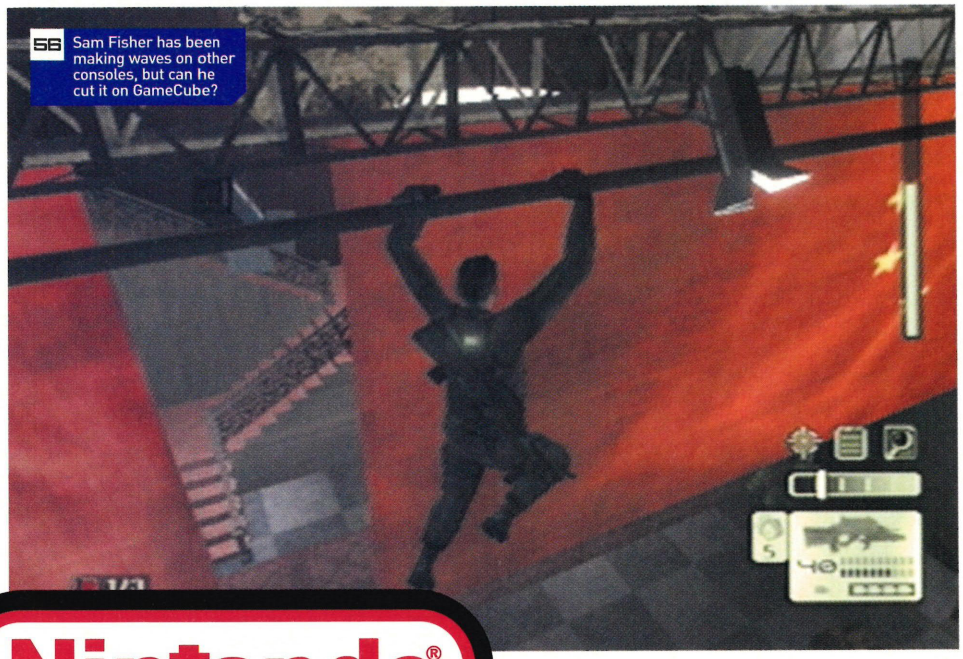

58 Sam Fisher has been making waves on other consoles, but can he cut it on GameCube?

REVIEWED 06/2003

NINTENDO GAMECUBE

p50 *Def Jam Vendetta*
p54 *Burnout 2: Point of Impact*
p56 *Tom Clancy's Splinter Cell*
p60 *Skies of Arcadia Legends*
p62 *Red Faction II*
p64 *NBA Street Vol. 2*
p66 *ISS 3*

Plus! *WWE: Crush Hour, The Sims, Castleween* and more!

GameCube Import Review

p74 *Soul Calibur II*

GAME BOY ADVANCE

p76 *Wario Ware Inc.: Minigame Mania*
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Nintendo REVIEWS

WE PROMISE THAT EVERY GAME HAS BEEN THOROUGHLY TESTED BY THE EXPERTS AT *NINTENDO OFFICIAL MAGAZINE* AND NOW WE'RE REVIEWING IMPORT GAMES, TOO

HOW WE SCORE

Games are now scored out of ten. Titles that score nine or ten out of ten will receive our new TNT (Top Nintendo Title) award.

10	**TNT: GOLD** Gaming perfection
9	**TNT: MUST BUY** Almost perfect
8	**HIGHLY RECOMMENDED**
7	**GOOD**
6	**AVERAGE**
5	**COULD BE FLAWED**
4	**POOR**
3	**DIRE**
2	**DISASTROUS**
1	**A DISGRACE**

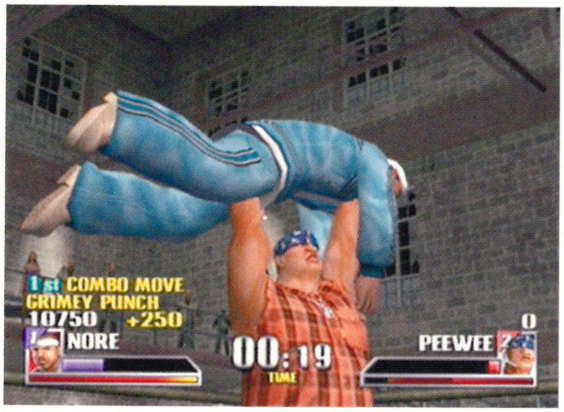
HOW OUR OFFICIAL REVIEWS WORK

LOG ON

www.easportsbig.com

IN BRIEF

The idea of wrestling is a sound one. Big men who are good at fighting hurl each other about for a solid five minutes. *Def Jam Vendetta* drafts in rapper caricatures and a banging soundtrack, but the basic drop-a-man-on-his-face fun remains. It helps if you like rapping a bit though.



❑ Who's in control here? The redneck with the lumberjack shirt or the baby-blue tracksuit wearing home-boy with the sweatband?

❑ The boys react badly to the news that clown face paint doesn't actually make you look 'gangsta'. It makes you look like a tit

DEF JAM VENDETTA

AFTER YEARS OF PEACEFUL NEGOTIATION RESULTED IN DIPLOMATIC DEADLOCK, THE RAPPERS FINALLY RESORTED TO VIOLENCE.

DETAILS

1-4 Players

2 Blocks

Price: **£39.99**

Release: **23 May**

Publisher: **Electronic Arts**

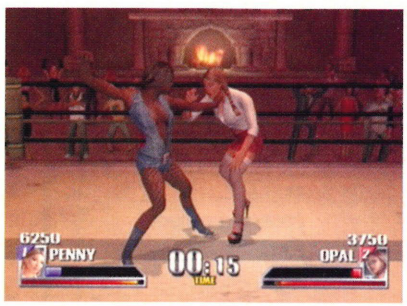
Rappers are always fighting. When MC Hairy Spoons called Jah Volvo's momma a big fat bitch, the violent reprisals robbed hip-hop of two of its most talented sons. We may never hear an album as good as *Yo, Here's Spoons Up Ya Ass* ever again. It's sad.

Def Jam Vendetta is a wrestling game with a difference – it stars rappers that actually exist outside of our minds. As well as glorifying violence in the most life-affirming way, it also teaches a healthy disrespect for ladies. You fight good and the 'skanks' and 'hos' is all over you, innit?

Because we're not über-conservative *Daily Mail*-readers, we see this for the harmless bit of fun that it is. We also see this as the finest wrestling game on GameCube – not that there's much competition. If this starred The Rock instead of Method Man, your dirtiest WWE dreams would be a reality. As it is, you just need to check it out.

Booming hip-hop gets you straight into the swing of things and even the pre-bout posturing fits in with the mood. In the ring, the sharp controls come to the fore. The people that made this did *WWF No Mercy* on N64, so they know their stuff. Ⓐ and Ⓑ grapple and strike, but this basic combination lets you pull off a massive variety of moves in conjunction with the 3D Stick.

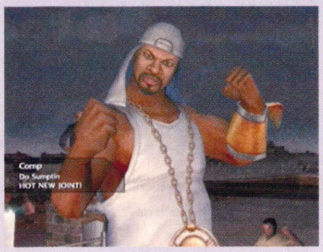
Usually a wrestling game Tutorial mode is a tedious affair, but here you're shown a series of movies to get the most out of the simple controls. Even blocks and counters quickly become second nature and the special moves are well animated. You'll have seen a lot of them before though, with The Undertaker's Choke Slam and The



❑ Ladies please calm yourselves! There are more than enough alcopops to go around

WHO ARE YA?

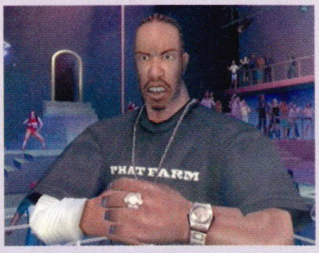
Until the sequel, *Def Jam versus Top of the Pops*, is released next year, it's only head-nodding hip hoppers that'll know who the fighters in this game actually are. It's okay though, you can pretend, just like they do at Radio One. Learn these names and faces, point at our screens and sound off like you're down with the motherloving CPT. Respec'!



❑ **GHOSTFACE KILLAH. All that he's got is you. Word is born**

❑ **NORE. He's God's favourite, but will he end up being yours?**

❑ **KEITH MURRAY. The most beautifullest thing in this world**

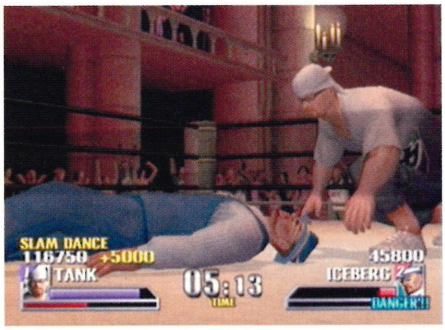


❑ **LUDACRIS. He's got a headache, but it ain't a tumour. Ask Missy**

▶ People's Elbow masquerading under different names. The main thing is, it all looks like it hurts like hell.

This being an EA Sports BIG! title you expect some extreme meter-building action to be going on somewhere and here it's the Momentum System. Charismatic characters build it more quickly, but basically a succession of varied strikes and throws put you in the Blazin'!! Zone.

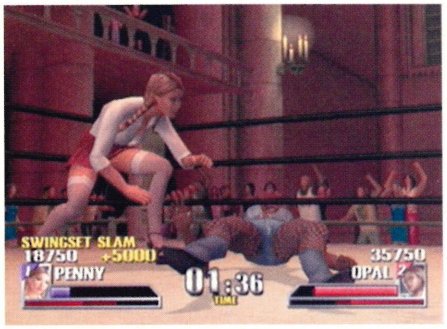
Now when you grab hold of someone and tweak the C-Stick you'll really knock the hell out of them. The camera swishes around as you pummel them with an unblockable special attack, possibly culminating in a knockout if they're already too weak to withstand the pounding.



❑ **Poor fashion sense is what killed Iceberg. Tank stumbles off to burn those wack bermuda shorts**

❑ **Wrestling Class. 'And now I'm gonna slap him on the back of the head until his eyes fall out'**

❑ **When the referee calls 'ropebreak', both fighters are given a piece of rope to chew on. It has been soaked in bear urine and gives the chaps the motivation to carry on. Hmm, yummy big bear wee string...**

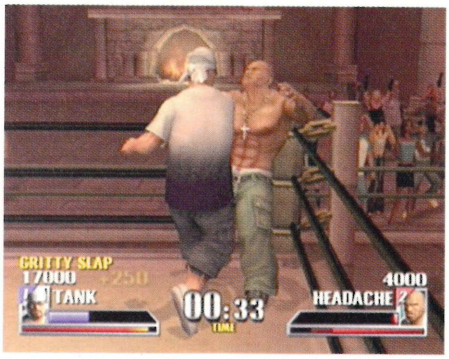


❑ **Penny (aka Britney) is gonna pay for trying to nick Opal's tight blue pants while she sleeps**

You can dive right in and mash up rappers like Redman, Ghostface Killah, DMX and Ludacris, or lock in for the long haul in the Story mode. Here you kick off as one of four made-up brawlers, paying off a debt on behalf of your mate, Manny.

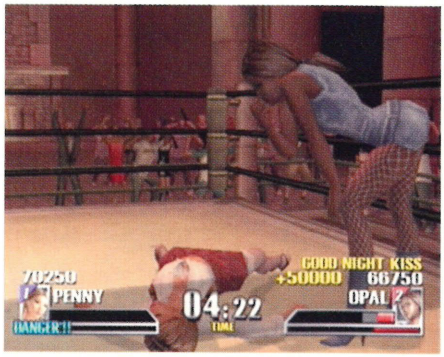
He later doubles as your tag-team partner as you wade through the henchmen of game overlord, D-Mob. He's also knocking off your ex-missus, which is the kind of emotionally wrenching plot line they dish Oscars out for. You know that.

Every win sees cash come in that you can use to boost your abilities. Kick off as fat man, Tank, and you'll hit like a train, but have no speed or charisma. You need to address that deficiency pretty fast or bad boy rappers will knock you the hell out. What's more, it's a shame you can't fight through as one of the Def Jam boys themselves, but it's a decent single-player game all told.



❑ The slapping noise as you beat on a man is great. In the ring of course, not the showers

❑ Real attention to detail – that's what makes a great game. You know it, we know it, EA know it



❑ Do you find these ladies attractive? News flash: they're built out of triangles. Don't mug yourself

This is especially true when you factor in the girl fights. Win a big bout, and two fine honeys will start bitching at each other as they contest your affections.

The love-struck ladies call each other 'skanks' and 'hos', move their heads from side to side and snap their fingers, just like the real-life skanks and hos that appear on daytime TV emotional-torture show, *Trisha*.

You choose the one you like the best – don't worry, you won't need to get down on one knee – and then control her in a ruck with the other one. It's very funny, but also sort of tragic when the spurned loser slopes off all wounded. When she looks back at you on the way out, you can see the emotional hurt through the veil of tears in her pretty eyes. Maybe I'll see ya later, bee-yatch!

BLAZIN' SQUAD

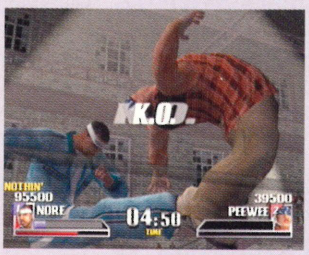
If wrestling was just about sweaty chaps lying on top of each other, we wouldn't like it so much. But it's all about the finishes and *Def Jam* is class at this. Because it's a caricatured fighter, the finishes are imaginative. We like NORE's, as it's possibly the most damaging testicular attack we've ever seen.

❑ Step one: Scoop the man up and drop him on his fat head. Painful!

❑ Step two: Jump onto his ass and make sure those legs spread wide

❑ Step three: Leap into the air and elbow drop into his family jewels...

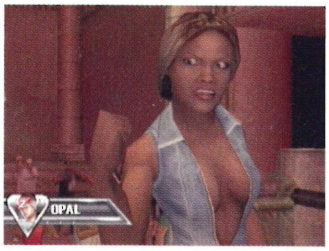
❑ Step four: Let's see that from another angle... Nutcracker! Sweet!



❑ Step five: In evolutionary terms, he's now a non-man. Kick his spine

"THE PRE-BOUT POSTURING FITS IN WITH THE MOOD."

❑ That's all the choice we get? Jesus! Okay... Opal's showing the most flesh



❑ 'Why haven't you done the dishes?!' Hmmm... maybe not Opal, after all

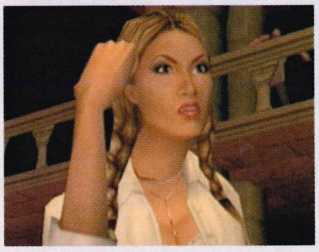
❑ It looks painful when the ring is stretched to accommodate four big men

IS THAT YO CHICK?

Part of the reward system in *Def Jam Vendetta* is earning the respect of ladies. Just like real life, they'll want to be your girlfriend if you kick enough ass and each bout opens up more pics in a gallery of your luscious lady. But hold it right there, dogg – you don't get to see any rude bits. However, you do get to make them fight. Heh, heh.

❑ **You can win or buy photos like this to look at. Your friends will believe she's your actual girlfriend**

❑ **Another emotionally-shattering *Jerry Springer*-style moment. Made us feel empty and worthless**



❑ **Penny sounds off passionately about 18th Century architecture and the plays of Samuel Beckett**

❑ **High heels. White knickers. Kinky boots. Fishnets. Also the contents of Dominic Wint's weekend wardrobe**

❑ **'Oi! You two at the back! Make war, not love!' Some of the rappers don't understand right away**

▶ This being a hip-hop game, we can't ignore the soundtrack. There are 18 tracks from Def Jam artists featured here, including a few from rappers not appearing in the game. It's none of your b-side rubbish either, featuring classics like Public Enemy's *Fight the Power* and Method Man's *Bring the Pain*. The new DMX single *X Gonna Give It To Ya* pumps away, and you really can't go wrong with Redman's *Smash Sumthin'*.

But hearing the mighty PE made us think. Why isn't Flavor Flav in here swinging big clocks around? Where's Jay-Z? Why can't we crack LL Cool J's head open? And that's just the Def Jam artists. How about a from-beyond-the-grave Tupac against Biggie match-up? Or Eminem with a chainsaw versus Ja Rule with a baguette? There's so much potential here and we think EA have missed out by only tapping a tiny part of it.

It's also pretty inexcusable that there are no weapons on show. Okay, so we realise whipping out a 9mm would defeat the point of the game, but what about baseball bats, chains and chairs?

Something else they should have carried over from the land of steroids and baby oil is the variety of match types. It's a blast in multiplayer, but would have been even better with all that crazy Hell in a Cell and Ladder stuff. **Dean (from the block) Scott** NOM

❑ **Kick Ludacris' ass in his own back yard. Yes, those are strippers wiggling on the podiums at the rear**

VERDICT

GOOD	■ The fighting system is very robust and satisfying. It looks pretty damn painful. ■ The atmosphere is bang on, with slick rappers bouncing along to the beats.
BAD	■ You have to be into hip-hop. There's no hidden Charlotte Church character here. ■ They should have robbed more from WWE – weapons and different matches.
FUN	It can't fail to be a laugh. Beating a man down has been fun since the dawn of time.
VALUE	There's stacks to unlock, with 44 fighters and a whole CD worth of choice tracks.
LIFE	Once you've gone through the Story mode, it'll only be loaded up for multiplayer.

A top-class brawler that sets the standard 'proper' wrestling games need to beat. You're in complete control of the über-violence and the soundtrack's fab.

8

LOG ON

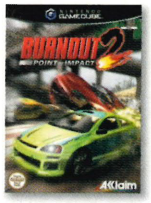
www.acclaimuk.com

IN BRIEF

The follow-up to the GameCube's most manic driving game has more cars, bigger crashes and faster tracks. This is everything a sequel should be: bigger, better, faster, more!

NINTENDO OFFICIAL MAGAZINE
TOP NINTENDO TITLE
MUST BUY

DETAILS



DOLBY SURROUND PRO LOGIC II

1-2 Players

5 Blocks

Price:
£39.99

Release:
Out Now

Publisher:
Acclaim

BURNOUT 2: POINT OF IMPACT

STOCK UP ON THAT CAFFEINE AND SUGAR, FOLKS – YOU'LL NEED THE MIND SKILLS OF DERREN BROWN TO GET THROUGH THIS IN ONE PIECE.

The mighty *Burnout* had all the thrills and excitement that we expect from an arcade racer. But when it was all finished it left us feeling a bit empty. We craved more. But now our prayers have been answered because *Burnout 2* has more of everything.

Your mission begins with Offensive Driving 101, a brief introduction into the world of the road maniac. From there it's straight into the action. Of the cars initially available to you, only the Roadster and Muscle cars are worth bothering with, the others are rubbish.

But the standard Championship mode is only there as an appetiser, the main course is the Custom Championship mode, which contains pumped-up motors that would surely scare even Michael Schumacher. This is where the real fun's at.

❑ Weather effects are new to *Burnout 2* – watch those corners

❑ Don't worry yourselves, kids, not all the cars in the game look this rubbish

❑ Scream if you want to go faster, scream if you think we're going too fast

▶ The greatest improvement is in the course design. Rather than a selection of disjointed circuits, *Burnout 2* takes place over an entire city, from airport terminals to coastal roads. There's also great variety in the lengths of the races; some are three-minute mad dashes around a loop, while others are point-to-point blowouts down a twisty mountain track. The cars handle well and after a couple of hours you'll be sliding them around like a pro.

Graphically, *Burnout 2* is very crisp and detailed, and there are some excellent blur and zoom effects when you're using the all-important speed boosts. Speaking of the Burnouts, it's now easier to fill the meter and there's the advantage of linking them – it's possible to do almost a whole race on one continuous Burnout.

But stop! If you're about to throw this magazine to the floor and rush out to get your copy, hold on – there's one niggle; *Burnout 2* is way too short – *Burnout* pros will complete this over a weekend; there are two-player games and the incentive to go back and beat your best times, but is that enough?

Unquestionably the finest racing title on GameCube, *Burnout 2* will speed into your life and demand your time like nothing else on four wheels, but it'll be gone again in a flash. The time spent here will be one of the your most action-packed GameCube experiences yet. **Dominic Wint** NOM

❑ It's not the best view, but you will hit more stuff this way, which is fine if you're playing in Crash mode, but not so good otherwise

CRASH COURSE

Most of you will buy *Burnout 2* for the supreme racing experience and kudos to you for that. But a certain number of you will delight in causing as much carnage as possible, so especially for you there's the brand-new Crash mode.

You start with a full boost meter and a clear road. Your mission is to head into traffic and cause the most devastating pile-up imaginable. Hugely rewarding and immense fun, this is certainly a welcome addition to the *Burnout 2* package.

❑ No point calling the insurance company and losing your no-claims bonus – it's just a scratch

❑ We understand, yeah... it was totally the other bloke's fault. Just blow into this bag please, sir

VERDICT

GOOD	■ Totally manic. *Burnout 2* is so fast it'll have your heart leaping into your throat. ■ The track design is superb and perfectly tailored for the game's street-eating cars.
BAD	■ One-player mode is too short – six hours to win, ten to unlock everything. ■ The courses are so good we'd like to turn off the traffic and cruise for a change.
FUN	Serious fun. If you're a fan of driving games then you'll absolutely love this.
VALUE	The best racer on GameCube, bar none. *Burnout 2* easily laps the competition.
LIFE	You'll finish it quickly, but there's always Crash mode and the two-player game.

So sweet, so swift, so short. While it lasts, *Burnout 2* will have you hooked like a prize trout. If ever there was an ideal way to waste a weekend, this is it.

9

LOG ON

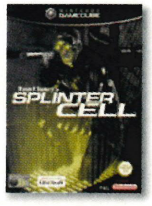
www.splintercell.com/uk

IN BRIEF

Sam Fisher is a highly trained field operative of a top-secret organisation that goes by the name of, shhh... the Third Echelon. Realistic objective based missions see Sam sneaking through the shadows, creeping past guards and crawling through air ducts as he uncovers the activities of a corrupt Russian leader.

NINTENDO OFFICIAL MAGAZINE TOP NINTENDO TITLE MUST BUY

DETAILS



1 Player

17 Blocks

Price: **£39.99**

Release: **6 June**

Publisher: **Ubi Soft**

❑ 'That's right, Mr Security Guard. I said lick the door open with your filthy tongue,' Sam Fisher, unbalanced and a little bit scary

❑ Whatever you do, don't sneeze. The meatheads in this room won't offer you a tissue, but they might rip your ears off for a laugh

TOM CLANCY'S SPLINTER CELL

AFTER THE DISAPPOINTING *GHOST RECON*, UBI SOFT STRIKES BACK WITH STEALTHY, SHADOW-CREEPING ACTION OF THE HIGHEST QUALITY. PAY ATTENTION...

Yes, this is a Tom Clancy game, but you would be making a big mistake to rule it out on the assumption that it's similar to the hugely disappointing *Ghost Recon*. Apart from the involvement of stealth, the two have nothing in common, which is fortunate because *Ghost Recon* was a bit crappy, and this isn't. Far from it.

In fact, it's impossible to accurately compare *Splinter Cell* to any other game on a Nintendo console, because there simply hasn't been anything like it before. The nearest comparisons in gameplay are in *GoldenEye 007* or *Perfect Dark* on the N64, on the basis that the levels are objective driven and involve creeping around, tactically taking out your foes. But this is a different breed of stealth altogether.

Unlike James Bond or Joanna Dark in the two FPSs mentioned, Sam Fisher is capable of a multitude of stealth-related manoeuvres. As well as running and jumping, he can duck down and creep around silently, sneak along walls, peer around corners, grab onto ledges and shimmy, abseil down buildings... the list would go on even longer if we were to detail the entire range.

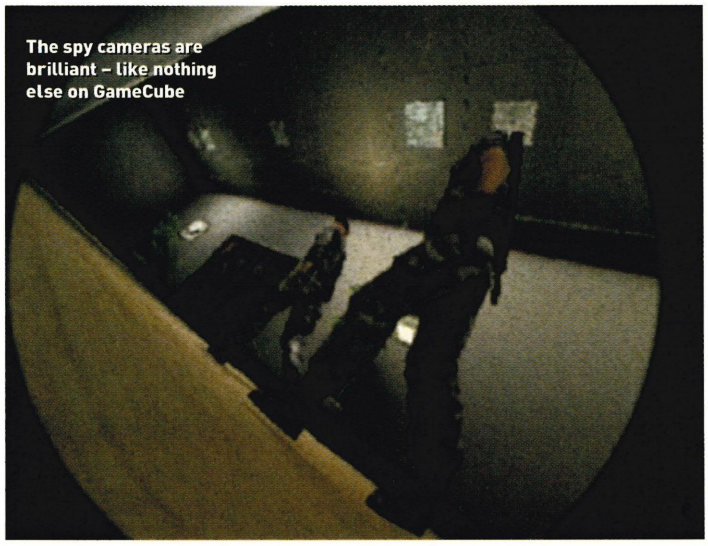
But one move that we can't fail to mention is the

❑ Not only is Sam a stealthy sod, he's also a dab hand with computers

❑ '... and they all had their necks broken' – bedtime stories, Fisher-style

A TIP TO GET YOU STARTED

Every time you begin a new level your inventory is renewed. This means there is no point in saving ammo and other weapons, only to end up finishing a mission without ever using them. You'll usually get plenty of supplies to use throughout a mission so make sure you use everything available. It's important to choose the right weapons for a situation, but don't hesitate to use plenty of kit.



The spy cameras are brilliant – like nothing else on GameCube

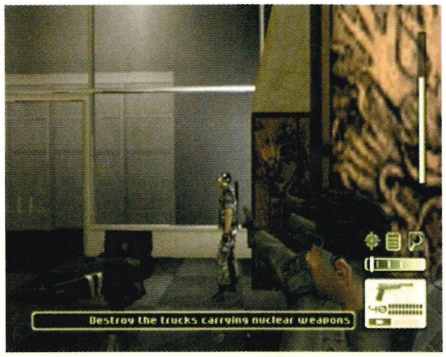
"IT CREATES A TOTALLY BELIEVABLE ILLUSION OF REALISM AND SUSPENSE."

▶ Split Jump. If Sam finds himself in a narrow corridor with oncoming enemies and nowhere to hide, he can jump up and do the splits, putting his feet on the walls either side of him and suspending himself in mid-air, out of sight. Now he can either watch as they pass, oblivious to his presence, or drop in and put the soldier to sleep with a firm blow to the head.

That's the thrilling thing about *Splinter Cell* – the necessity to think and the freedom to devise your own way through. With such a vast array of easy-to-perform moves and brilliantly designed levels, you will almost always have multiple choices of how to deal with things.

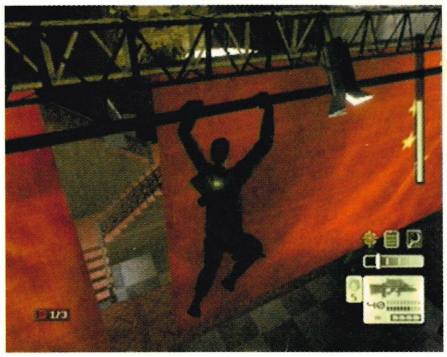
The pace of the game is quite slow because each time you enter a new area you'll have to spend time assessing the situation and devising a way of dealing with it. But this doesn't make it boring, rather it makes for a game of rich atmosphere and high suspense.

Will you evade, kill, stun, knock out or distract enemies? Will you use your gun, a grenade, stun gas, or sneak up and whack them with your fist? Where will you hide the bodies? These are but a few of the choices you'll have to make throughout the game and after an hour or two you really will be thinking like a covert operative or super-silent assassin.



❑ It's tricky, but see if you can shoot his nose off

❑ Stock up on kit when you can – and use it all

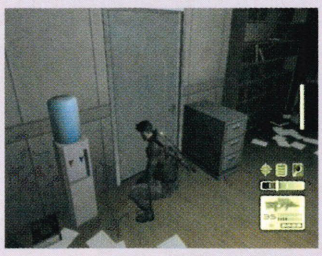


❑ Sam Fisher will go anywhere to avoid being seen

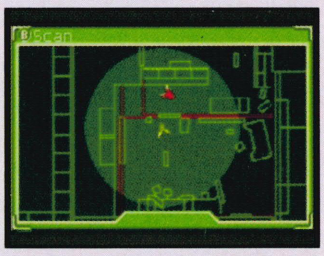
OPSAT GBA

The GameCube edition comes with many little tweaks over other versions, but the coolest of all is the exclusive GBA connectivity, which includes some of the best link-up features so far.

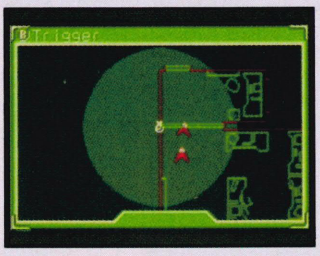
Plug your GBA into the GameCube at any time during play and it will display Sam's Opsat, showing a wireframe overhead view of the surrounding area. You'll also be able to see where guards are, detect mines, deactivate wall mines and remotely detonate bombs, too! Check this out...



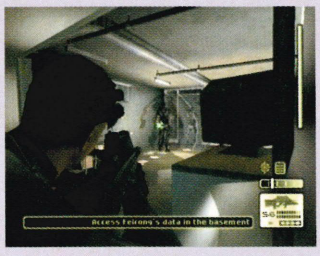
❑ It's important not to be seen – there could be guards the other side



❑ But with the GBA linked up, you'll know exactly where the soldiers are



❑ Another GameCube exclusive is the remote-controlled Sticky Bomb

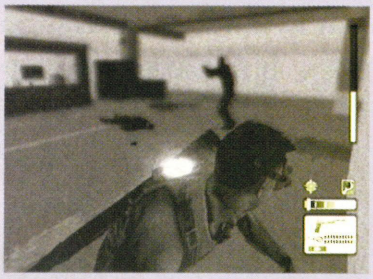


❑ When the soldier passes by, use the GBA to detonate the mine

I SPY

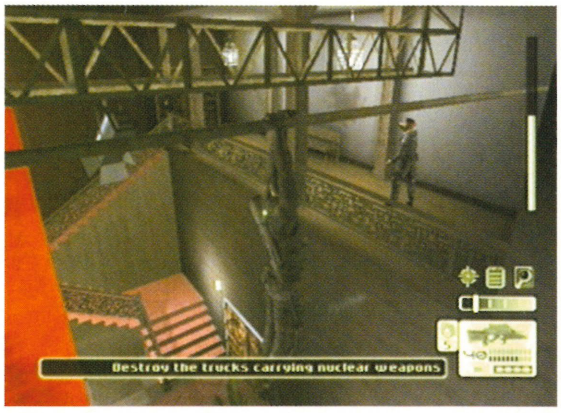
Fisher has lots of gear, such as Stun Coils and Sticky Shockers that paralyse enemies and a super-cool camera that sprays out knock-out gas. But by far the most useful are his goggles. He'd have a hard time without them.

❑ Instantly useable is the zoom feature, allowing you to spy on distant activity



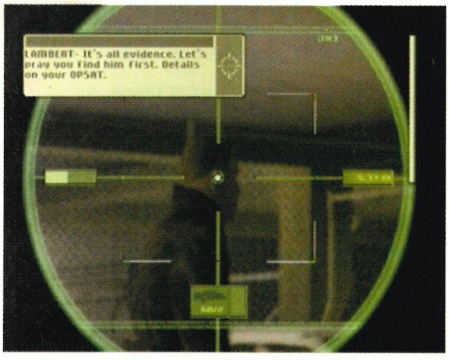
❑ You'll also be able to use the night-vision feature from the beginning

❑ As you progress through the game, you'll be able to use the infra-red feature, too

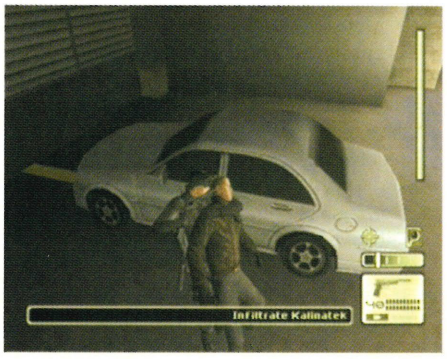


❑ Destroy the nuclear weapons themselves – that's just not clever

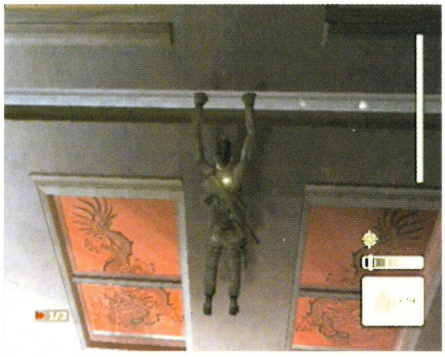
> "THE NEAREST COMPARISONS IN GAMEPLAY ARE IN *GOLDENEYE 007* OR *PERFECT DARK* ON N64."



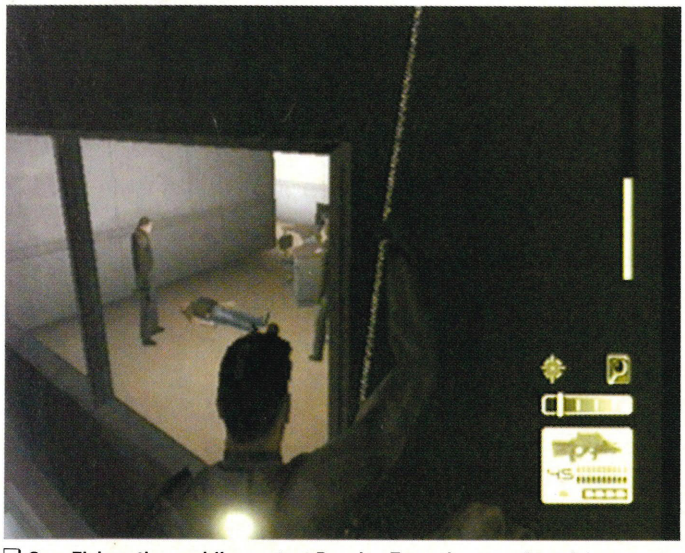
❑ This is the most realistic sniper scope we've seen. It's so real you almost *don't* want to pull the trigger – until you remember how much fun it is



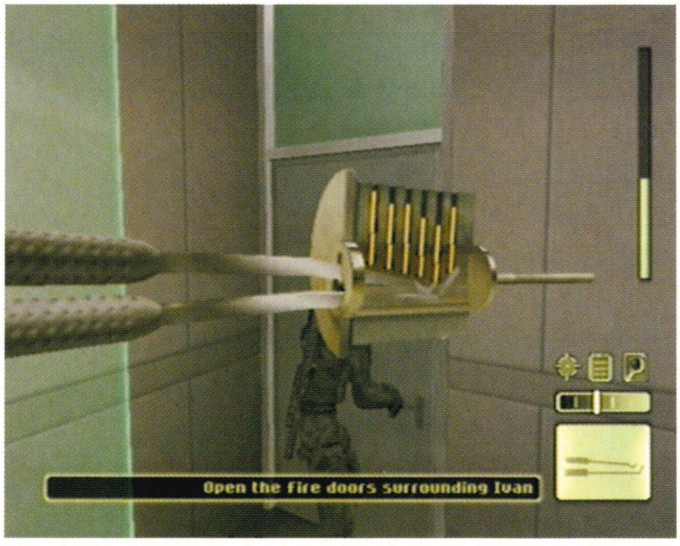
❑ 'You touch-a my car, I smash-a your face'. Or in this case, puncture your head with a hollow-point shell. You'll need to clean the car afterwards, though



❑ Come on Fisher, there's got to be an easier way of getting a table at the local Chinese restaurant. Try picking up the 'phone next time, dumb-ass



❑ Sam Fisher, the world's greatest Peeping Tom, observes the grisly scene



❑ When picking a lock, the camera zooms in on the mechanism for a better view

❑ Very cool indeed, but *Splinter Cell*'s atmospheric lighting is just one plus

❑ Did you wash your hands? The staff cower as Sam Fisher inspects the kitchen

▶ But having all those skills would mean nothing without some well-designed environments to sneak around in. Thankfully, Ubi Soft have done a great job with creating military bases, embassies and many other such locations just as you would imagine them to be in real life. Okay, so you will occasionally find a pipe conveniently placed to help you up a wall or across a gap, but you won't find many of these game-like conveniences that are all over the place in most other titles.

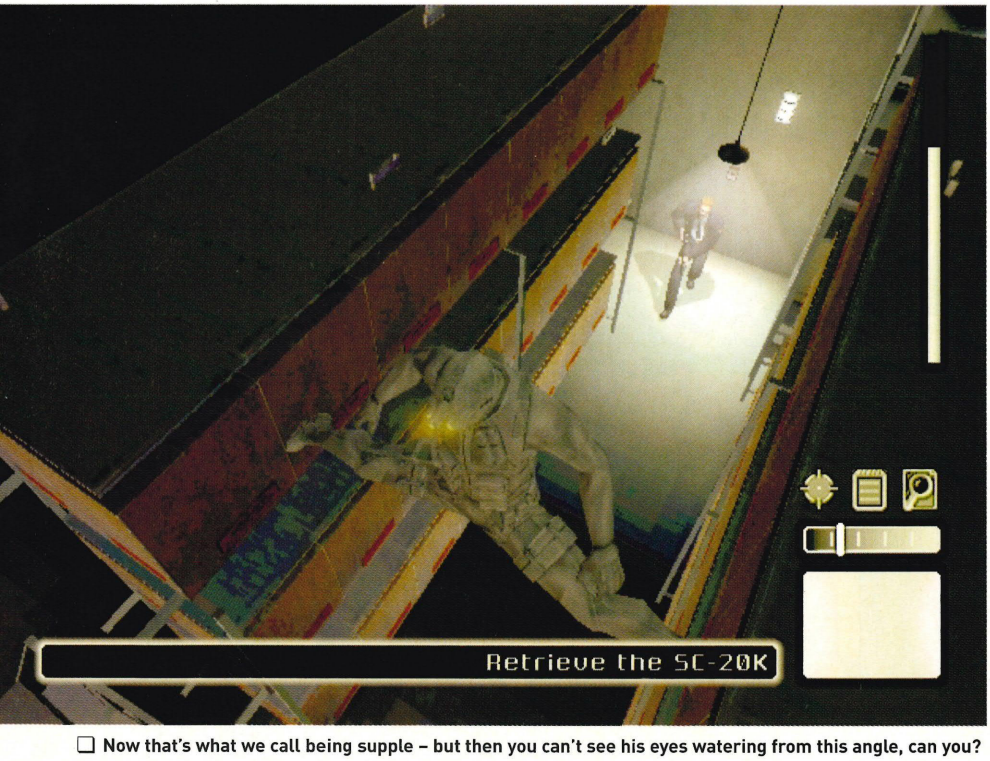
Walk into an office and you'll see computers on desks and filing cabinets, all placed in a totally realistic way, no gimmicks. If guards suddenly enter, you'll have to do something clever, like strategically position yourself ready to attack, set up a trap, or switch off the lights and hide from them.

That's where the lighting element comes in. Each and every area is brightened by real-time light sources. But this is not simply to look pretty, although it does. Stand Sam in a dark area and his black suit will render him almost invisible to the enemy eye.

With this in mind, you'll spend most of your time crawling around in dark corners, switching off and shooting out light bulbs to avoid being spotted by enemy soldiers. The bar at the bottom-right of the screen shows how much light is hitting you.

This is something you'll have to constantly monitor, but as long as the marker is in the first sector you'll be safe – another element of gameplay unlike any other game we've ever played.

Splinter Cell may be compared to *Metal Gear Solid 2* or *Tenchu: Wrath of Heaven*, but it manages to create a totally believable illusion of realism and a deep sensation of suspense, unlike any other stealth game we've ever played. **Mike Jackson** NOM



❑ Now that's what we call being supple – but then you can't see his eyes watering from this angle, can you?

VERDICT

GOOD	■ The realistic level design forces you to think strategically – like a real operative. ■ Gadgets like the Diversion Camera and Stun Coils make this a unique experience.
BAD	■ Having to go back to the Checkpoint each time you die can get tedious. ■ Sam's footing doesn't change with the surface he's on, making him 'float' at times.
FUN	Sneaking round a CIA HQ building completely unnoticed is very satisfying.
VALUE	GameCube owners are the only ones to benefit from the cool GBA link-up.
LIFE	With the need to creep cautiously, each level can take you hours to finish.

Splinter Cell has it all: realistic level design, cool weapons and gadgets, a huge set of moves, sharp visuals and easy controls. A must-have game on GameCube.

9

SKIES OF ARCADIA LEGENDS

THE FIRST PROPER TURN-BASED RPG ON A NINTENDO SINCE THE SUPER NES. AND IT'S ALL GOOD.

LOG ON

www.sega.com

IN BRIEF

Fantasy adventuring set in the skies of, er, Arcadia where you play as swaggering young pirate, Vyse, who gets caught up in an enormous battle- and puzzle-filled quest to save the skyways and the planet below.

DETAILS

1 Player

3 Blocks

Price: **£39.99**

Release: **23 May**

Publisher: **Infogrames**

Loyal Nintendo fans who'd rather die than play another brand of console have had a bit of a raw RPG deal over the past few years. Sure, there have been action RPGs like *Zelda* and let's not forget the repetitive-yet-absorbing collecting madness of *Pokémon*, but for those whose idea of gaming heaven is beautifully rendered, turn-based battles and meaty stats, it's been as dry as a bone.

But thanks to this port of the popular Dreamcast adventure, the drought is lifting. You play as Air Pirate dude, Vyse, in a world where galleons fly and monsters attack with alarming frequency. While this makes nipping out for a pint of milk rather more of an ordeal than it should be, it also serves to create an amazing and inventive universe full of intrigue, mystery and fellow pilots for you to team up with or fight against.

The action is split into three main sections: the first is exploring and gathering clues, quests and information; the second is engaging in (mostly) randomly generated battles with an awesome array of beasts; third comes that all-important fiddling with character stats, tactical equipping of items and upgrading your abilities.

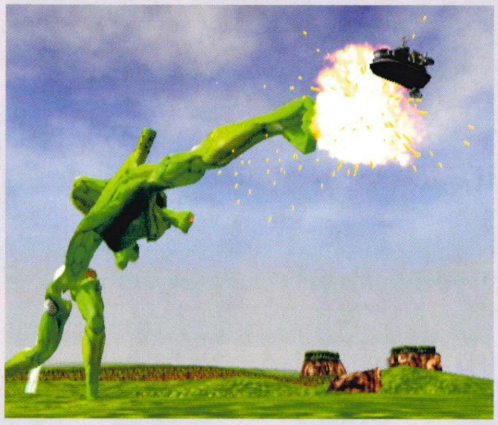
❑ As Vyse shows, there's no harm in admitting you need a quick dump before getting back to sailing the skies and fighting evil

Skies Of Arcadia Legends merges and carries off all three gameplay elements with real class. The learning curve is just steep enough to make you feel constantly challenged without ever overwhelming you and even the magic upgrade system (where you distribute magic stones in battle so

❑ Those crazy RPG designers are so damned cool – it's just one far-out boss after another, isn't it?

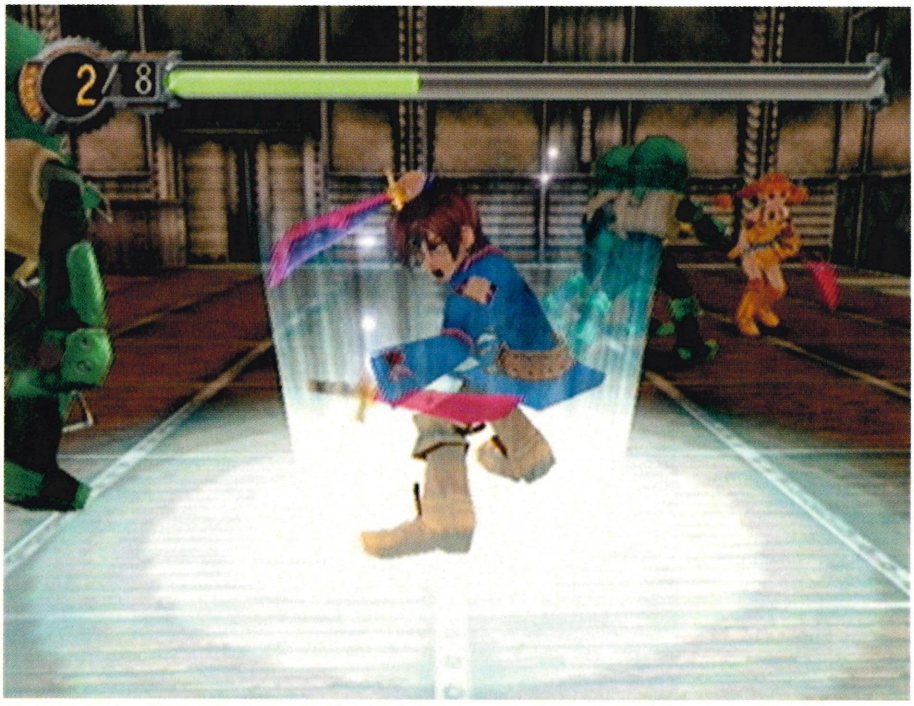
NOW IT'S *MY* TURN TO SMACK *YOU*

If you've never played a traditional RPG you may struggle with *Skies'* battles at first. Rather than taking control of one hero like, say, Link in *Zelda*, you command a team by issuing battle commands via menus. The enemy hits you and you sock him right back, taking it in turns and employing some strategy until one of you falls over. It sounds dull and for some people it is, but if you like your challenges a bit more cerebral, you'll find these fights as tense as Jordan's bra elastic.



❑ When the Jolly Green Giant wasn't flogging canned peas, he was clobbering flying pirate ships out of the sky

❑ Like many an RPG, the fighting action pauses between turns, allowing you to easily see who's going to get it next



❑ We've said it before, we'll say it again – you *cannot* look hard in an outfit like that. Lose the boots, Vyse

❑ 'No! Pirate Isle sounds really boring. Let's sail to Accountant Cove or Pensioner Point instead!'

❑ It's always best to keep your evil machinations to yourself. This guy needs to go back to villain school

▶ that they gain experience and level-up) is intuitive and quite user-friendly after a just few attempts.

It's true that aside from a few extra sub-quests there's nothing much different from the game's earlier incarnation and you can certainly tell it was developed for a less-powerful machine in terms of it's visuals, sound and presentation. Still, RPG fans are gasping for adventures like this and providing you're willing to put in the commitment – average play length is a whopping 70 hours – this is an epic and enjoyable RPG that most people will enjoy. **Darren Fox** NOM

VERDICT

GOOD	■ A fantastic story that's told very well over the course of an enormous game. ■ Snugly plugs the gaping hole in so many Nintendo-loving RPG fans' lives.
BAD	■ It doesn't do much that's new and RPG novices will balk at the sheer size of it. ■ We've been spoiled by *Zelda*'s beauty and this looks rubbish in comparison.
FUN	If you like all things RPG you'll weep with joy – action-heads won't care so much.
VALUE	Not only is it a long adventure, but a complex and rewarding one, too.
LIFE	It'll last longer than some of your relationships – it's that darned big.

It's about time! This is as huge as it is entertaining and a great way to spend a few months of your life, but it does absolutely nothing to win over non-fans.

8

RED FACTION II

GET YOUR COAT, MR BOND, *RED FACTION II* IS IN TOWN AND IT'S TAKING NO PRISONERS – IT'S JUST EXECUTING THEM RIGHT WHERE THEY STAND.

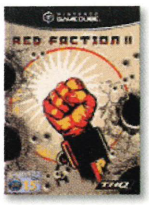
LOG ON

www.redfaction2.com

IN BRIEF

Join the Red Faction and overthrow the rule of a vicious tyrant. Along the way you'll be joined by your fellow mercenaries and get the opportunity to destroy most of the scenery. This is one FPS that's not for the faint-hearted.

DETAILS



1-4 Players

7 Blocks

Price: **£39.99**

Release: **30 May**

Publisher: **THQ**

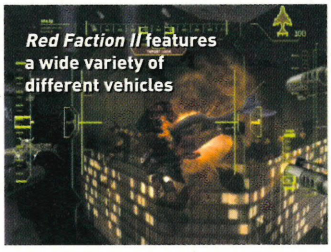
Stealth is over rated. Ask any revolutionary and they'll tell you the best way to overthrow a vicious despot is to square up to him, all guns blazing, a tactic which *Red Faction II* embraces wholeheartedly. You play Alias, a former government marine who's turned against his old bosses and joined the Red Faction, a gang of mercenaries out to rid the world of the evil dictator, Sopot.

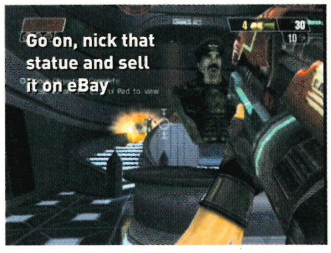
Red Faction II is all about action. From the moment the first level loads up you are immersed in a world chock-full of gunfire and explosions. You'll need to take a deep breath before you begin as this is absolutely non-stop. Mission objectives are updated on the fly so there's no pause in the proceedings to tell you where to go.

You'll also be accompanied by fellow members of the Red Faction, demolitions experts, snipers, heavy weapons specialists and so on. They will all help you out and they react really well to your orders. *Red Faction II* also allows you to get inside some cool vehicles; tanks, mini-submarines and an excellent Battle Armour suit.

This game has superb controls, whether

Sopot, eh? Would he plaster his name around so much if it was Gaylord?


Red Faction II features a wide variety of different vehicles

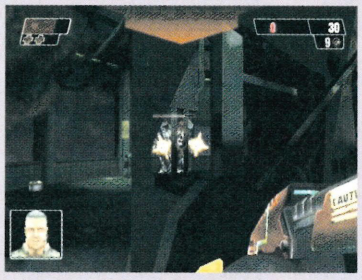

Go on, nick that statue and sell it on eBay

NOTHING'S GONNA STOP US NOW

Red Faction II's unique feature is the Geo-Mod system that allows you to destroy parts of the scenery to create new paths for yourself. In certain sections of the game you cannot progress without blowing things up.

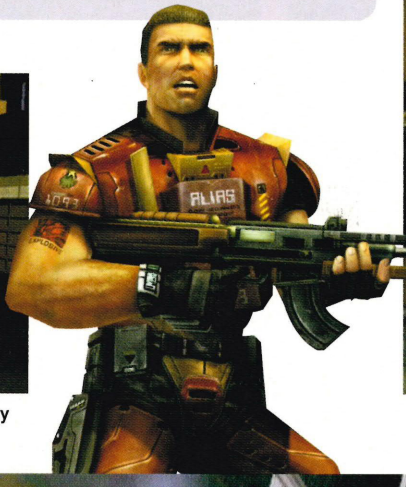
It may sound like a gimmick, but you soon learn to seek out for weak-looking walls or floor panels and use them to your advantage. It's also a great way of sneaking up on your opponents and killing them, real quiet.

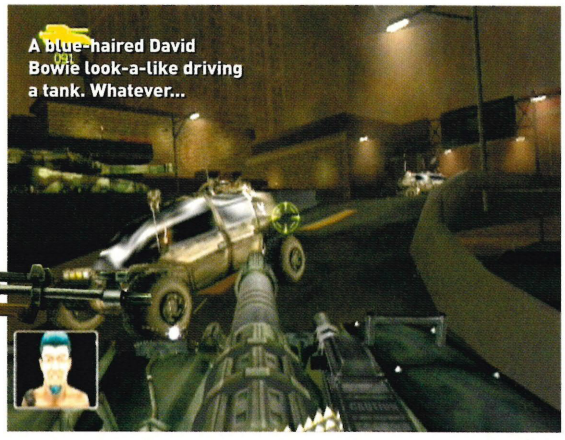
❑ It's all about the guns in *Red Faction II* and this one is particularly tasty



❑ 'New pants, please'. That's some mean hardware coming your way, soldier

❑ Many parts of the scenery can be destroyed by heavy weapons – why not give it a try?





A blue-haired David Bowie look-a-like driving a tank. Whatever...

Remember when there were no First Person Shooters? Life was bad...

▶ you're flying through the skies on the back of a gunship or hauling ass across a war-torn city, manoeuvring Alias and cycling through the weapons is a doddle. The selection of firearms is also good. You'll get your hands on standard machine guns and pistols as well as the more exotic sniper rifles and rocket launchers.

Fans of the deathmatch are well catered for with a wide selection of multiplayer modes and the arenas are good with loads of characters to unlock in the main game. The four-player mode does plod a bit though – it doesn't have the excitement of *TimeSplitters 2*.

Sadly the game also runs out of steam towards the end. After setting such a blistering pace in the early stages it reaches something of an anticlimax further on, which is a great shame.

Red Faction II is a solid and initially exciting blaster. It sets off at a blistering pace, but it loses momentum after three or four hours, although it remains fun. It's definitely worth considering, but only after you've bought *Metroid Prime* and *TimeSplitters 2*. **Dominic Wint** NOM

VERDICT

GOOD	■ *Red Faction II* is the complete opposite of stealthy shooters – it's a welcome change. ■ The controls are excellent. Moving Alias around quickly becomes second nature.
BAD	■ It can't maintain the pace of the first six levels. It's still good, but it's not great. ■ Multiplayer doesn't measure up to *TS2*. Compared to the one-player, it plods along.
FUN	For the first four hours this is riveting. You will not be able to put the controller down.
VALUE	As good as *007 Nightfire*, slightly behind *TimeSplitters 2* and *Metroid Prime*.
LIFE	There's a deep, entertaining story line and the multiplayer should keep you going.

Red Faction II starts off with a bang, but gradually dips after that. It's a top adventure with excellent controls and a deep plot, but it's not in *Metroid Prime*'s league.

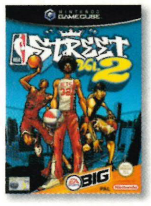
8

NBA STREET VOL. 2

LOG ON
www.uk.ea.com

IN BRIEF
It's NBA, in the street. But the first one never came out on GameCube in the UK, hence *Vol. 2*. Is that brief enough? More? Okay, it's arcadey as hell and the special moves will have you shaking with excitement.

DETAILS



1-4 Players

7 Blocks

Price:
£39.99

Release:
Out Now

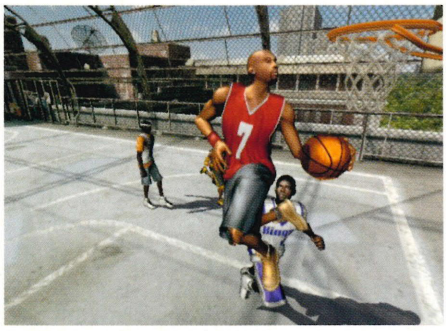
Publisher:
EA

Forget the rules of the game. Reality sucks. We want long shots that blaze off like cruise missiles. We want stupid Harlem Globetrotter haircuts and skill moves constantly. We don't want peaks of excitement, we want thrills in the red zone all the time. *NBA Street Vol. 2* delivers all this in a totally exhilarating video game experience.

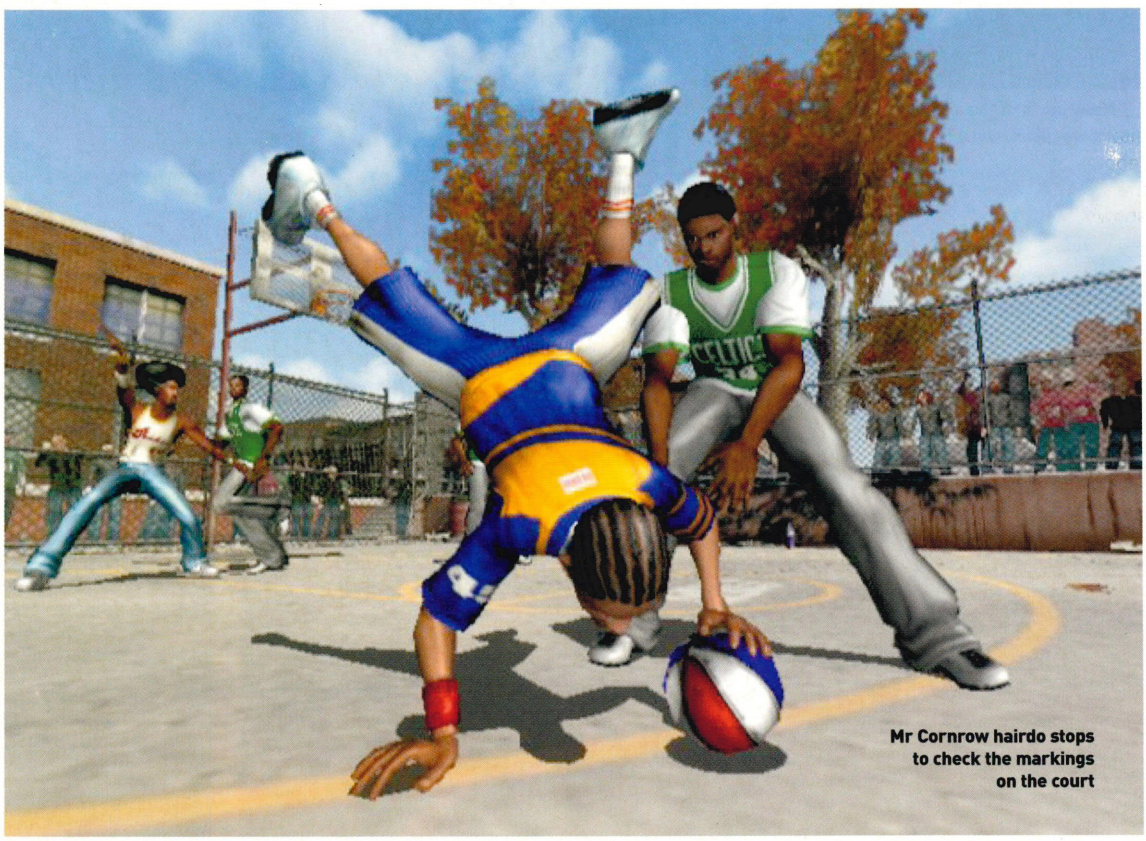
Three-on-three basketball is the basic premise, but with everything turned up to 11. You get megastars from the NBA's past like Magic Johnson mixing it with the likes of Shaq, each one playing the game of their lives. It's all about flair and style, with the craziest skills and build-ups getting you closer to that ultimate special move that could win you the match. Even a crucial block at the hoop can pump the blood like hitting the back of the onion bag from thirty yards in a football match.

The controls feel great. Popping the ball around the court is a piece of cake, but the real killer moves take practice. Stuff like Kick Passes and the

'Now you see it...' *NBA Street* has the moves to make your pal look like a chump

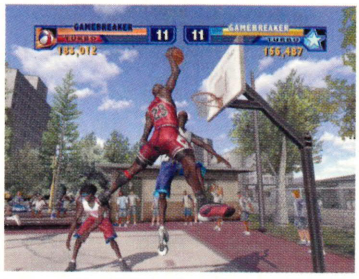


Strike a pose! Camp basketball will never take off

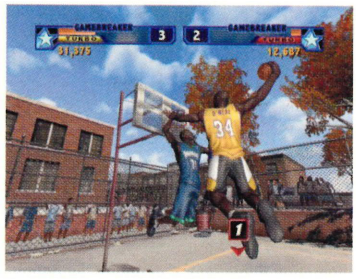


Mr Cornrow hairdo stops to check the markings on the court

ON ANY NORMAL DAY WE'D RATHER PULL OUR TOENAILS OUT THAN PLAY NBA GAMES. BUT THIS IS NO ORDINARY B-BALL EXPERIENCE.



❑ 11-11... just how the Yanks like a score...

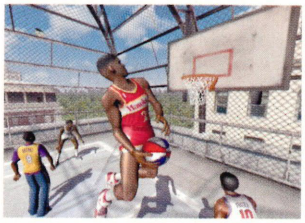


❑ ... but 3-2 is a whole lot more civilised

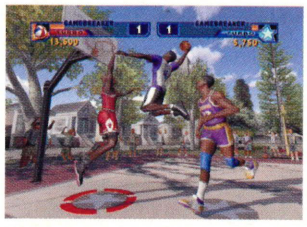
Nelly rides the ring, as no.64 spots someone nicking his wallet

hilarious Off the Hezzay where you rebound the ball off someone's face are worth working for. Such blatant showboating is very rewarded, making this a near-perfect multiplayer sports game.

A tedious opponent might be able to beat you without truly scaling the heights of flair, which is bad, but if you're both committed over all else to looking good, you'll have a blast. Trust us, you don't even need to like the sport. In fact, it probably helps if you don't. **Dean Scott** NOM



❑ Come on now, it's a family game



❑ Siamese b-ball before surgery

VERDICT

GOOD
- Great likenesses and cracking animation. It features the character roster of justice.
- Takes a sport we care little about and makes it fantastically exciting. Winner!

BAD
- You don't have to commit to the flair – you can still win by being boring.
- The original may not have made it to the UK, but this is still too similar.

A cracking arcade basketball game and arguably the best basketball title on GameCube. We wish someone would release an arcade footy game this good.

8

DISNEY SPORTS BASKETBALL

❑ Surely roosters have an unfair advantage when slam-dunking

Log On: www.konami-europe.com

15 Blocks

1-4 Players

Look over there to the left, Mickey. Look what you could have had. They've got NBA superstars hitting eye-melting special dunks with Redman rapping in the background, you've got some people out of *Duck Tales*. You blew it, now get out.

It looks alright, but *NBA Street Vol. 2* destroys it. The pace is virtually comatose and the A.I. teams are brainless. Blocking shots and stealing is easy, unlike the erratic shooting. There's no excitement seeing Donald Duck go for a dunk, so don't bother.

The diversity of character skills ranges from Goofy being good in the air (obviously) and Huey being quick on the ground. Maybe in America there are idiot kids that like Mickey Mouse and tedious b-ball games, but not here, surely? **Dean Scott** NOM

❑ Is it just us, or does Goofy look kind of sinister?

VERDICT

In any other issue, a pretty crappy basketball game. In an issue also starring *NBA Street Vol. 2*, a disaster. Konami should stop making awful Disney games.

4

Price: £39.99

Release: Out Now

Publisher: Konami

LOG ON

www.
konami.com

IN BRIEF

Twenty two chaps do their very best to direct a light sphere into one of two metal frames at the end of some grass using only their feet and faces. This madness lasts for 90 minutes and you can't kick it to a man when he's past the last man, but not the goalie... or something.

DETAILS

1-4 Players

59 Blocks

Price:
£39.99

Release:
Out Now

Publisher:
Konami

ISS 3

MEMBERS OF THE GAMECUBE FOOTBALL JURY, WE PRESENT TO YOU EXHIBIT A: *ISS 3*, AND B: 'WHY *WINNING ELEVEN 6* NEEDS A EUROPE RELEASE.'

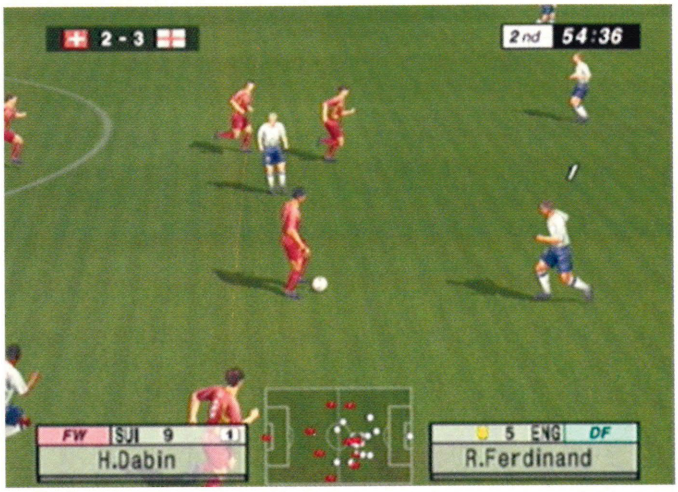
Way back in N64 times, it was unthinkable that a *FIFA* game could be better than an *ISS* game. It was like Liverpool suddenly dropping to the third division as Rochdale won the Champions League – desirable, yet highly unlikely. Well rub your eyes, sports fans, because it's finally happened.

ISS 3 is the worst in the series since, well, forever. The animation is wobbly, the passing is rigid and the tackling is as fussy as hell. There's also a brand-new feature called Close Up that zooms in as you try and dribble past a man, but it feels completely superfluous.

The satisfaction you get from carving out an opening and scoring a classy goal just isn't here anymore. That crucial strand of football DNA born in *International Superstar Soccer* on the Super NES appears to have died out. Very sad.

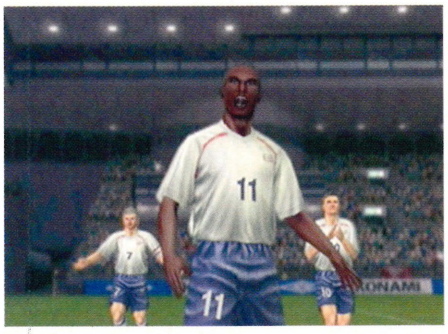
And why is it necessary to have little jostling cut-scenes before a corner is taken? Why do we have shots of men in suits cheering when you score? It's all false drama. The old *ISS* games generated real excitement through their gameplay.

Earning points by winning matches to buy new kits and the like just doesn't feel worthwhile. Add to that the fact that half of the player names are genuine and half are made up, there are no player names on the shirts and you really can't tell who they are by looking at them, and you'll realise this is bad. **Dean Scott** NOM



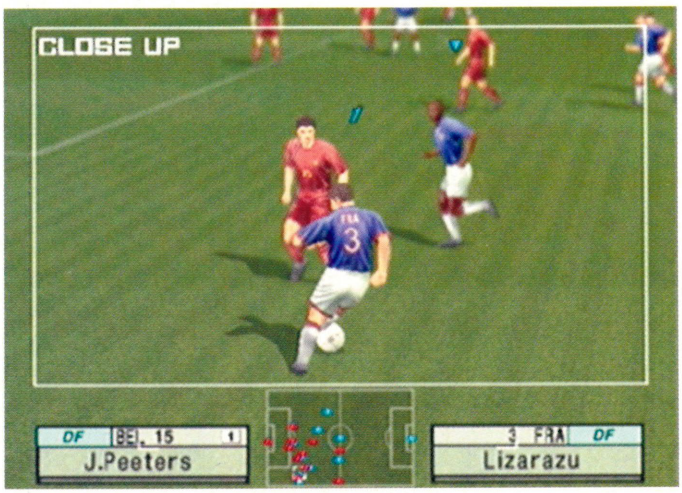
Rio looks worried as the Swiss break forward with customary verve and skill

Petit aims for some guy's hot dog in the tenth row



Becks and Owen applaud Sol taking the no.11 shirt

This replay is sponsored by Nike



Close Up allows you to see yourself falling over the ball in excruciating detail

VERDICT

GOOD

- At least it tries to inject a sliver of originality with the Close Up trick moves.
- It's football – even an average footy game is better than those silly American sports.

BAD

- Wobbly players pass like a Sunday league team and goals are cheap.
- There's no excuse for random player names. Whatever the reason is, sort it!

It's not a catastrophe, but it's barely average and that's not good enough. Compared with Konami's brilliant (Japan-only) *Winning Eleven 6*, it seems like a bad joke.

5

LOG ON

www.activision.co.uk

IN BRIEF

The X-Man known as Wolverine is on a mission to find out who stole his memory, pumped him full of metal and released a deadly virus into his body. Most of us would just accept it as a hangover and move on, but Wolvie wants revenge.

It's all a bit of a blur – Wolverine flips his lid and goes into a feral rage, doing loads more damage to these guys in pants

There's always some loon who necks too much at the office party and starts a fight – Logan just happens to have 12in claws

X-MEN 2: WOLVERINE'S REVENGE

IMAGINE A GAME IN WHICH YOU COULD PLAY WOLVERINE, THE COOLEST X-MAN. IT'D BE GREAT... BUT THIS AIN'T IT, BUB.

Picture it: a developer's office; a production meeting is in progress. 'We've got the *X-Men* license, guys!' Whoops of glee. 'Now let's work really hard and make a great game out of it'. Utter silence. 'Okay, let's do a half-arsed job.' More whoops of glee.

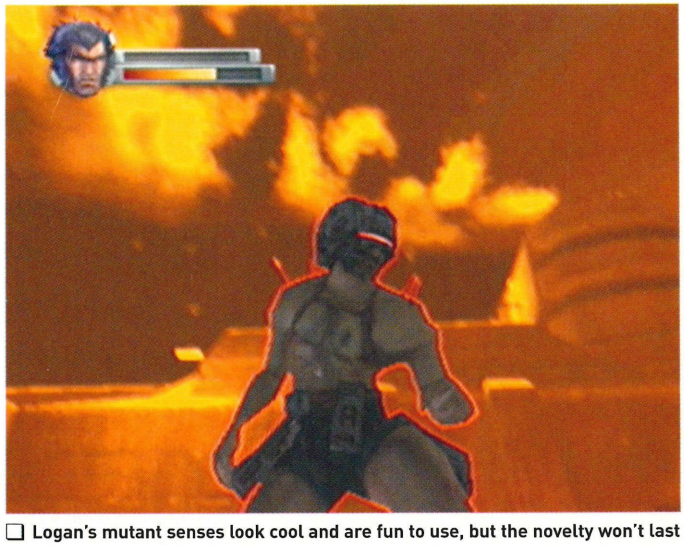
That's one way to remove excessive body hair, but we recommend shaving

For starters there's no likeness to the characters in the film, but that's not too important. Patrick Stewart (aka Professor X) contributes to the voice-acting though, which is mostly excellent, but apart from that the sound is poor. Visually it's okay, but nowhere near as good as it could have been; the graphics get lost between cartoon and realistic in style. At least there's a decent plot, penned by comic writer, Larry Hama.

Logan's mutant senses are the game's best feature, revealing heat signatures and scent trails, and the Stealth Strikes and attack combos look cool, but spoil the flow of the game and show off the questionable A.I. of the bad guys. The camera is pretty twitchy, too.

What's more, Logan can be difficult to control and, for a metal-laced mutant killing machine, he has no feeling of weight, sliding around as if he's on ice and twirling in mid-air while jumping.

Wolverine's Revenge feels like an idea for a 2D game, given the 3D treatment – it lacks depth and is really just a souped-up version of the GBA game, so you might consider saving £10 and going for that instead. Disappointing, but not unexpected. **Kingsley Singleton** NOM



Logan's mutant senses look cool and are fun to use, but the novelty won't last

VERDICT

GOOD

- Wolverine's mutant senses are great and popping his claws is cool. 'Snikt'.
- There are plenty of extra costumes and bonus features to unlock along the way.

BAD

- The sloppy controls and lack of Wolvie weight make you feel far from the action.
- The Stealth Strikes and combos are smart, but break up the flow of the game.

A wasteful, average slash-'em-up, *Wolverine's Revenge* will struggle to raise your pulse above resting. And if it wasn't an *X-Men* game, it'd be even worse.

6

DETAILS

1 Player

4 Blocks

Price: **£39.99**

Release: **Out Now**

Publisher: **Activision**

LOG ON

www.
thq.com

IN BRIEF

Over 20 of the biggest WWE superstars leave the ring and jump into the driving seats of some monstrous vehicles for a weapon-based arena mash-up. This may only cost 20 quid but with shallow, unexciting gameplay, we recommend you save your dosh.

As a whole the game is poor, but the cars look cool

WWE CRUSH HOUR

IT MAY BE CHEAP AS CHIPS, BUT WE WERE FAR FROM CHEERFUL WHEN WE BOOTED UP THIS USELESS VEHICULAR COMBAT TITLE FROM THQ.

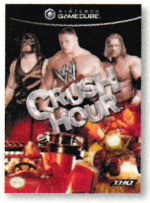
Take the biggest stars from WWE, give them the keys to insane motors armed with rockets and machine guns, then slap them in an arena for a battle to the death – that's *WWE Crush Hour*.

But wait all you WWE and crazy battle game fans, don't get all excited and slap your 20 notes on the counter just yet, because we doubt you'll enjoy this.

WWE fanatics will obviously find appeal in all the wrestlers featured, but unfortunately, apart from seeing the wrestlers proper intro movies, the WWE brand has very little influence on the game. The game modes are named after wrestling events like Cage Match, but it all boils down to the typical vehicular battles, like killing ten opponents quickest or holding onto the belt.

You'll spend most of your time boosting around until you grab a weapon power-up, then you'll charge in for an attack. The vehicle explosions are unimpressive and with few weapons to find, and the lack of a four-player mode, this is a half-hearted effort by THQ, which won't keep you amused for long. **Mike Jackson** NOM

DETAILS



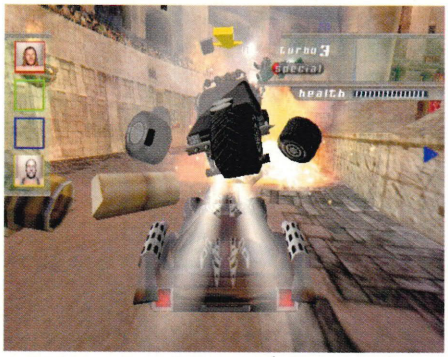
1-2 Players

2 Blocks

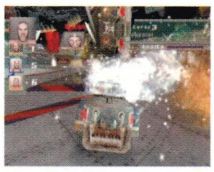
Price:
£19.99

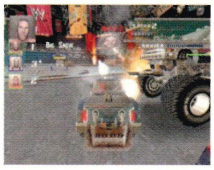
Release:
Out Now

Publisher:
THQ



❑ Dotted around the arenas you'll find fat power-ups, useful for causing this kind of carnage


❑ Explosions are weak...


❑ ... lacking any impact

VERDICT

GOOD
- The faster vehicles move at a rapid pace – trashing people at high speed is sweet.
- Some of the arenas are impressively big, with multiple rooms and floors.

BAD
- The idea of vehicle battle games is mayhem, so where's the four-player mode?
- The sound effects are poor, with weak explosions and choppy voice samples.

Shallow, uninspired game modes, plain graphics and the lack of a four-player mode makes this disappointing, regardless of its budget price tag.

5

1 Block

1 Player

Price: £29.99

Release: 30 May

Publisher: Capcom

Verdict:

6

RESIDENT EVIL 2

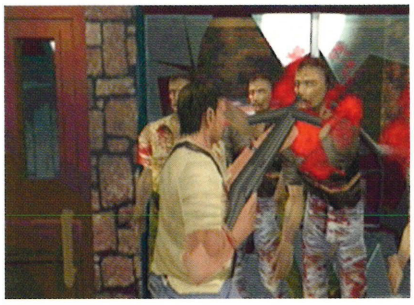
ALL THOSE YEARS, ALL THOSE GAMES, BUT IS *RESIDENT EVIL 2* STILL SCARY?

Are you getting that feeling of déjà vu? We don't blame you. The first version of *Resident Evil 2* was released on PSone in 1998. Since then, PC and N64 ports have been released. Now GameCube gets its own piece of the pie, but the game hasn't changed at all.

That's right! This is exactly the same as it was before. After seeing the amazing *Resident Evil* on GameCube, or the superior backgrounds in *Resident Evil 0*, you'll look at this and laugh. The truth hurts, but the fact is that a game that looked ultra real and scared the pants off gamers back in 1998, now looks like a blurry, low-res mess that couldn't unnerve a five-year-old. Well, maybe it could, but you get the point.

If you're a hardcore *Resi Evil* fan and think we're being too hard on an old classic, then you might want to invest in it. But if you've finished either of the two recent *Resident Evil* games and are looking for more of the same, this will probably disappoint you. **Mike Jackson** NOM

❑ Where it all kicks off: the burning streets of Raccoon City



❑ The graphics may look prehistoric now...

❑ ... but it's still fun wasting those zombies

❑ Oi! It's rude to shoot when people are eating

1 Block

1 Player

Price: £19.99

Release: Out Now

Publisher: Wanadoo

Verdict:

4

CASTLEWEEN

Two crazy kids, Alecia and Greg have managed to cross over to the realm of the dead, and now they have to find a way out of this spooky new world.

Castleween is a 3D platformer with linear 2D style levels, just like those in *Crash Bandicoot: The Wrath of Cortex*. Occasionally, the levels open out into large rooms, each containing a puzzle that you'll need to crack before moving on.

Other puzzles require the use of Alecia's ice powers, or Greg's fire powers, so you'll need to swap between the two to get through the stages. But generally, the gameplay is rather shallow, with little more to do than jump and swipe. And in some of the platforming sections it can be tough to judge where your character will land.

We also noticed that your shadow – a vital tool for judging your landings – disappears when you're jumping on small stepping stones. That's weak.

The visuals are just as dull, with blurry textures and low-detail environments, making this all-round rubbish. It's cheap, but if it's simple 3D platforming you're after, seek out the Bandicoot, not this. **Mike Jackson** NOM

❑ Halloween... nowhere near as good as it used to be

❑ The environments are bland, lacking the flair that would've given the game a Tim Burton feel

LOG ON

www.capcom.com

IN BRIEF

Help Jill Valentine escape from the zombie-infested Raccoon City in a remake of the game regarded by many to be the best of the original batch of *Resident Evil* games, that first appeared on PSone.

❑ The lady boss dishes out severance pay – Jill's response was swift after one poor chap complained about working conditions

❑ '... and all I went in for was to have a mole removed.' After years of underfunding, the NHS was getting particularly sloppy

RESIDENT EVIL 3: NEMESIS

'SCHOOL'S IN!' TAKE A TERRIFYING HISTORY LESSON AS CAPCOM GETS YOU UP TO SPEED WITH ITS FLESH-MUNCHING MEGA FRANCHISE.

Reckon you're harassed? Tutors want their homework done? Bosses want you turning up on time? Or your main squeeze wanting more quality time? It seems there's always someone on your case, but at least you're not Jill Valentine, circa 1999.

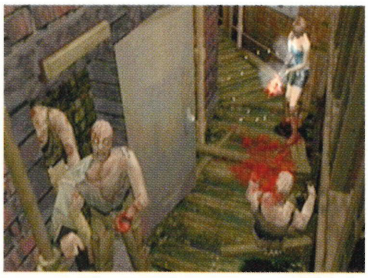
Jill's got a town full of zombies to escape from and a hulking great genetically engineered abomination called Nemesis on her tail that she just can't shake. *Resident Evil 3* is a game that'll put your problems into perspective at the very least.

Though it's really been made with players who want to catch up with the whole *Resident Evil* saga in mind, there's plenty to enjoy here in its own right. The classic *Resi* gameplay and controls return of course, but there's much more outdoor adventuring this time. The city streets are home to many puzzles of the tried-and-tested formula, but they still work well.

But where *Resi 3* still manages to be great after all these years is in the introduction of Nemesis. This is one bad-ass enemy and he can burst *through* walls to hunt Jill down. So, if you thought that just because this is an old *Resi* game you wouldn't cack yourself, you're in for a smelly shock.

Unfortunately, for all of its good ideas, *Resident Evil 3* also has one really bad one. By collecting different ammo components littered about the place you have to mix and create different types of firepower to use. It takes up too much space in your precious inventory, it's repetitive and ultimately far too much of a pain to be enjoyable – little wonder it hasn't been re-used since.

Nevertheless, this is the best of the early *Resi* games and a good way to catch up with the grizzly goings, paving the way for the might of *Resi 4*, coming next year. **Darren Fox** NOM



❑ No! Go the other way, zombie fool!

❑ 'Leave it!' Some guys will go to any lengths for a glimpse of Jill's knickers

DETAILS

1 Player | 1 Block

Price: **£29.99**

Release: **30 May**

Publisher: **Capcom**

VERDICT

GOOD

- It plays just as good as any recent *Resi* game and the Nemesis is brilliant.
- Fills in much of the Raccoon City part of the *Resi* universe for a new generation.

BAD

- The visuals haven't been enhanced since it appeared on an ancient, wimpy console.
- It pales next to the *Resident Evil* remake and has none of the innovations of *Resi 0*.

It looks awful and is expensive for what it is, but for the scarily obsessed *Resident Evil* completist it's essential and a damn good adventure for everyone else.

7

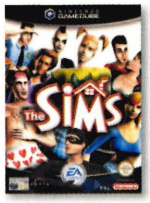
LOG ON

www.thesims.com

IN BRIEF

On PC, this virtual real-life simulator was a massive success. That's presumably because those guys have no actual lives of their own. Now GameCube owners have the chance to take control of a pretend person, furnishing his or her house and telling them when to go the toilet.

DETAILS



1-2 Players

60 Blocks

Price:
£39.99

Release:
Out Now

Publisher:
Electronic Arts

THE SIMS

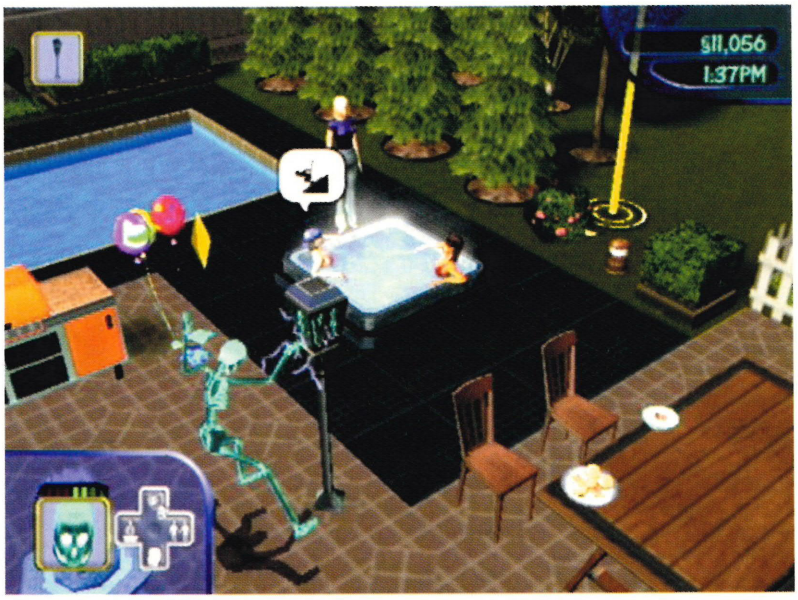
CAN'T GET ENOUGH OF EVERYDAY LIFE? ADDICTED TO *CHANGING ROOMS* AND *BIG BROTHER*? READ ON, FOOL...

The first ten minutes we had on *The Sims* will go down in *NOM* history – we don't remember laughing this much at a game in years. Our Sim kicked things off by getting jiggy with a fit babe in a hot tub. The groaning noises were bordering on the pornographic and then his mum wakes him up. It was a dream. Oh, great.

Next he's in the kitchen trying to borrow 800 squid off his old dutch. She isn't having any of it. He starts to hop about clutching his groin and then he pisses all over the floor. His mother goes ballistic and in the excitement of it all ends up doing the same on the kitchen floor. She goes for a bath and takes a leak on the floor in there as well. The horror! It doesn't get any better than that.

The actual point of the game is to make lots of money and be successful, but it's extremely open ended, so you can just mess around. After you've trapped your guy inside a burning house the appeal might start to dip, but any ladies in your house will be hooked – this is, after all, a digital doll's house. **Dean Scott** NOM

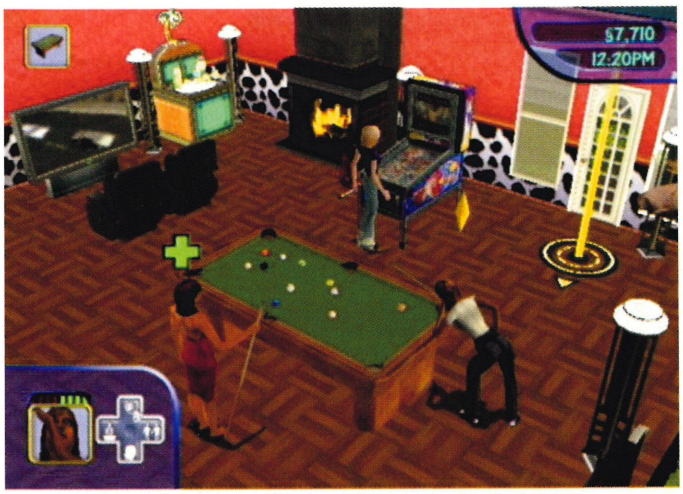
❑ Once the initial humour has worn off, *The Sims* feels like working in a virtual nursing home – a bit taxing



❑ Not even a flicker of interest from the lounging ladies. Try cutting your face off next time

❑ Choose your Upper Body carefully, it could make you lots of friends

❑ 9.22am: climb into Jacuzzi with hot crumpet. Just like real life, then...



❑ Not a screenshot this time, but a web-cam view of the editor's front room

VERDICT

GOOD

- You'll laugh more at this than at any game you've played before. For a while...
- It's an extremely original gaming experience. Very laid back and tranquil.

BAD

- When the laughs go, you're basically starring in an episode of *Changing Rooms*.
- You don't really 'play' this, you pass the time with it. Not exactly gripping stuff.

For a couple of hours, the killing stopped as we tried to make a better life for virtual Dean. We realised that our Mums would love it and went back to killing stuff.

7

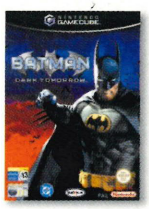
LOG ON

www.batman.kemcogames.com

IN BRIEF

Batman again comes to GameCube, but don't look this way for a better alternative to *Vengeance*, *Bat*-fans fans, because shoddy controls and generally poor design make this a shockingly bad game. Control Batman as he goes out on his usual villain-catching escapades in a sinister Gotham City.

DETAILS



DOLBY SURROUND PRO LOGIC II

1 Player

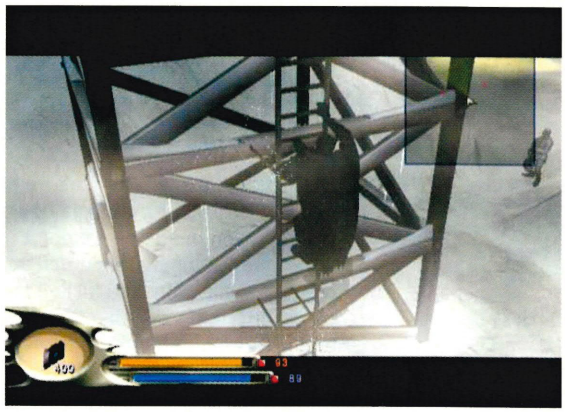
3 Blocks

Price: **£39.99**

Release: **Out Now**

Publisher: **Kemco**

❑ The graphics are dull – not the way a *Batman* game should be



❑ Even climbing up a simple ladder can be a tricky procedure

BATMAN DARK TOMORROW

HE'S BATMAN AND IT'S DARK, BUT DON'T BUY THIS TOMORROW, THE NEXT DAY, OR THE DAY AFTER THAT.

Anyone who knows anything about Batman could guess the general plot of *Batman Dark Tomorrow*. Some villains are wreaking havoc in the streets of Gotham City and Batman takes it upon himself to whup their asses.

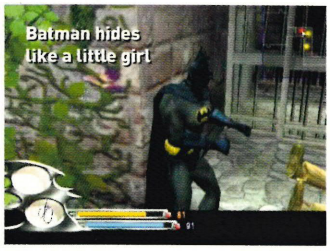
The game opens with a really good FMV intro, but your excitement will soon be trashed when you get to grips with the truly shocking controls.

A simple task like directing Batman around is made awkward by the character's huge turning circle. Combat is senseless, with enemies that'll paste you with gunfire until you get close enough to kick them down. It's just plain silly.

Swinging over rooftops at the start of the game with the Batcable is frustrating as you hit walls that you appear to have cleared. Trying to climb walls that Batman refuses to grab onto and missing your landing point because of the crap camera results in a fall to your death.

The camera flicks to various pre-set angles, often messing with your sense of direction. Kemco obviously knew of this problem, but instead of fixing the camera, they simply added a white tracer line on the radar to show where Batman has already walked.

We strongly suggest all *Bat*-fans and gamers alike stay well away from this one. **Mike Jackson** NOM



VERDICT

GOOD

- There's no doubt that Batman is cool and could be a great game character.
- The intro FMV is brilliant and captures the true essence of the *Batman* comics.

BAD

- Just seen the two 'Good' points above? Everything else in the game is rubbish.
- Can you remember the last good *Batman* game? Someone make a good one, please!

Batman Dark Tomorrow is one of the most unplayable games we have ever seen. It's a shame that *Batman* games don't do such a cool character justice.

3

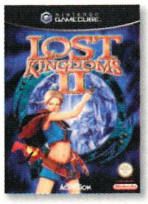
LOG ON

www.activision.co.uk

IN BRIEF

Use your deck of cards to battle enemies and collect yet more cards, creating the ultimate deck and destroying the threat of evil spreading across the land in this vastly improved sequel to last year's adventure.

DETAILS



1-2 Players

3 Blocks

Price: **£39.99**

Release: **Out Now**

Publisher: **Activision**

LOST KINGDOMS II

JUMP ON BOARD FOR THE SECOND INSTALMENT IN THE ENCHANTED CARD SERIES. BELIEVE US, YOU DON'T WANT TO GET RAPS FROM THIS DECK!

Given that they limit you to playing crud like *Old Maid* and *Rummy*, it's no wonder that the world has forsaken playing cards in favour of GBAs and e-Reader Cards. But hang on, no-one's told the inhabitants of Argwyll! There they cherish their decks and have taken a simple game of *Snap* to the next level.

Use your magical deck to summon forth colossal beasts and transform into winged demons in a fantasy role-player that's more *Yu-Gi-Oh!* than *The Legend Of Zelda*, but no worse off for that.

You play as the ridiculously named Tara Grimface in a mission-based game of battling and card collecting. The neat twist is that you actually use your deck of cards to battle. The many varied and splendid creatures you summon by pressing the corresponding on-screen icon are each aligned to specific elements. Therefore, much strategy is needed if you're to see off the invading forces.

❑ Summon humongous brutes and then issue them simple commands. 'Kill!'

❑ Cards that call allies for a swift strike are by far the best at dispatching beasts quickly. Brutal!

Much of what *Lost Kingdoms II* has to offer will be familiar to anyone who played its predecessor, but there are two major additions. The first is the welcome expansion of available cards to a whopping 200 – twice as many as in the first game. The second is that you are now free to battle anywhere on the game screen, as opposed to the first instalment's slightly annoying random battles in restricted arenas.

However, despite the occasional touches of humour and a hack-and-slash feel to some of the earlier fights, *Lost Kingdoms II* is an extremely complex game that those with a Carol Vorderman-like obsession with numbers will get the most out of. But it's still fast-paced and innovative enough for all but the most ardent stat-hater to enjoy. All in all, a great deal of fun. **Darren Fox** NOM

❑ Special effects are the reward for thumping enemies, plus grizzly deaths

VERDICT

GOOD

- The fights are vicious and morphing into different beasts helps you find secrets.
- A far more streamlined and satisfying adventure than *Lost Kingdoms*.

BAD

- Your deck can be demanding and the number-crunching won't suit everyone.
- The visuals are no more than functional. It won't show off your GameCube's power.

Combining the best bits of *Pokémon* and *Yu-Gi-Oh!* with fantasy RPGs, *Lost Kingdoms II* is a heady brew that may be too much for lightweight gamers.

8

IMPORT REVIEW

WE BRING YOU THE BEST GAMES THE WORLD HAS TO OFFER... FIRST!

LOG ON

www.
soulcalibur.com

Japanese import
Won't work on
a PAL machine

DETAILS

1-2 Players

4 Blocks

UK Price:
TBC

UK Release:
Autumn

UK Publisher:
Nintendo

❑ Yikes! Maybe Link should change his name to Mrs Link...

❑ Cringing won't do you any good, mate, get stuck in there

SOUL CALIBUR II

THE TOP GAMECUBE FIGHTER HAS LANDED IN JAPAN. START SAVING FOR THE FINEST HOUR IN NINTENDO BEAT-'EM-UP HISTORY.

The return of Sub-Zero in *MK: Deadly Alliance* was brutal, *SSBM* was all-star Nintendo fun, but this Autumn the best fighter is yet to come as *Soul Calibur II* prepares to crack skulls and break some bones on UK GameCubes.

To give you enough time to save up your hard-earned cash for the fighter of the year we couldn't possibly let another month go by without bringing you the first review of the Japanese version.

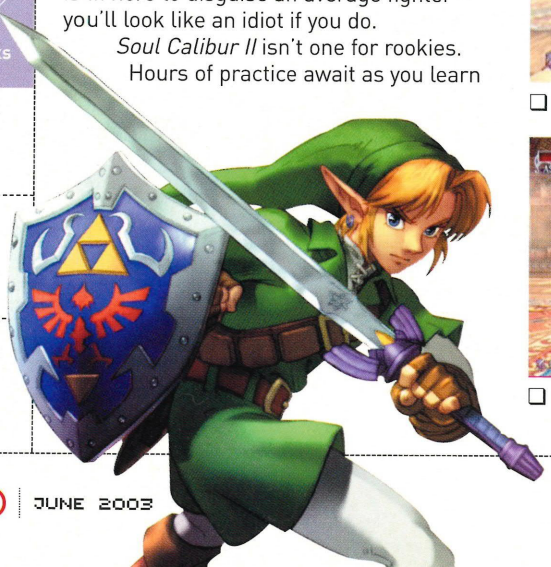
With a deadly adult Link playable from the start and performing explosive Bomb, long-range Boomerang and air-splitting Bow attacks, this GameCube-only incentive will already raise eyebrows among *Zelda* lovers everywhere. But don't go thinking that Link is in here to disguise an average fighter – you'll look like an idiot if you do.

Soul Calibur II isn't one for rookies. Hours of practice await as you learn

❑ Astaroth lets rip right in Yunsung's face. It's not only rude, but unhygienic, too

❑ He looks like an extra from *LOTR*!

❑ Inside or out, the graphics are great



IT'S ALL ABOUT THE LINK

One thing that was eating away at us was the idea that Link might be a second-class citizen, unlockable after 500 hours of play or something just as ridiculous, but that certainly isn't the case here.

Playable from the very beginning, you'll earn extra costumes for Hyrule's most famous son as you progress. The moves are some of the most famous in Link's repertoire and at various moments in Weapon Master you'll be treated to a full orchestral version of the famous *Zelda* theme. Obviously not just a B-list character by any means.

❑ **Get out of those old clothes, Link – you can earn extra costumes just by beating people up**

❑ **The ever-effective Boomerang, a stalwart of so many *Zelda* games is here for you to use**

▶ when to counter and block your opponent's attacks, master every fighter's moves (and believe us there are hundreds) and battle your way through Weapon Master mode. There's just so much to do.

The latter is exactly what fight fans have been dreaming about. Look up 'value' in the English dictionary and you'll find 'Weapon Master in *Soul Calibur II*.' Trek across the Weapon Master map, honing your skills and performing specific challenges against the clock – that's what this baby is all about.

The more fights you win, the more Experience and Gold you'll earn and that's when you can buy the likes of Link's Master Sword and Hero Shield. The further you progress the cooler the outfits are that become available and the more fighters become unlocked for you to master.

Being the Japanese version though, there is a helluva lot of Japanese text. The game modes are all in English, but as it's the best mode it's a shame that Weapon Master is plastered in Japanese.

You'll be able to get by, but being unable to learn the story and character bios will disappoint fans who want to enjoy everything that *Soul Calibur II* has to offer.

But if that doesn't bother you, the game offers one of the greatest-ever fighting experiences. Just taking on a mate and beating them to a bloody pulp over a few rounds will earn *Soul Calibur II* a huge following and hours of multiplayer replay value when the game arrives in UK games stores this Autumn. **Tim Street** NOM

❑ **Have it! Raphael bitch-slaps poor Cassandra with a typical flourish. He's just a bully really**

❑ **Divorce court, *Soul Calibur II* style. It's more bloody, but at least there are no lawyers around to stiff you**

VERDICT

GOOD	■ It's the most addictive fighter to appear on GameCube. Forget *MK*, save for this. ■ Hundreds of moves to master and extras to unlock will make this a real favourite.
BAD	■ If you don't know Japanese, Weapon Master is not as good as it could be. ■ The fight announcer is a little cliched, but thankfully you can skip those parts.
FUN	Overlook the Japanese and you've got a cracking one or two-player beat-'em-up.
VALUE	No other fighter on GameCube comes close – it'll be a must-have come Autumn.
LIFE	It screams value for money. With tons of extras to unlock it's a mammoth task.

Get saving NOW. This is the best fighter on GameCube. In fact we'd go so far as to say that it's the best Nintendo beat-'em-up we've ever seen.

9

LOG ON

www.nintendo.co.uk

IN BRIEF

Platform jumping and collecting music CDs are a thing of the past for Wario, because he's knocking out loads of video games on the cheap. Join Wario and his mates at Wario Ware Inc. and try beating 200 three-second mini-games using your lightning-quick skills.

NINTENDO OFFICIAL MAGAZINE TOP NINTENDO TITLE MUST BUY

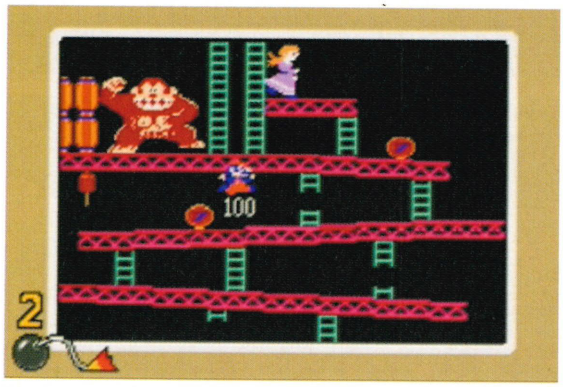
Two players alternating

DETAILS

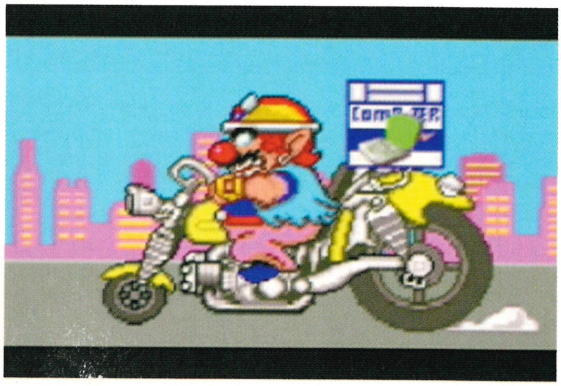
Price: **£29.99**

Release: **25 May**

Publisher: **Nintendo**



❑ It's a classic, but you'll only be playing it for about three seconds



❑ Wario has always been at the cutting edge of fashion, you know...

WARIO WARE INC.: MINIGAME MANIA

HE'S A BAD MAN THAT WARIO, BUT HE'S CREATED THE SHORTEST, FASTEST, FUNNIEST GAMES EVER TO COME TOGETHER ON ONE CART.

Catch that toast! Turn that car! Stop that train! If these sound like the bleatings of a madman then please forgive us, but you'll be doing exactly the same in a few days, thanks to *Wario Ware*.

There aren't many games we've given nine out of ten, but Wario will now have a Must Buy award of his own because this is one of the most addictive games you'll ever play.

One cart, 200 mini-games, three seconds for each. That's the rule and there's nothing you can do about it. All you can do is get better, play further with four lives, get the skills of a ninja and keep beating your high score. With a one point reward for each victory, getting over 60 is tough work and when you've got a mate berating you for schoolboy errors the pressure's well and truly on.

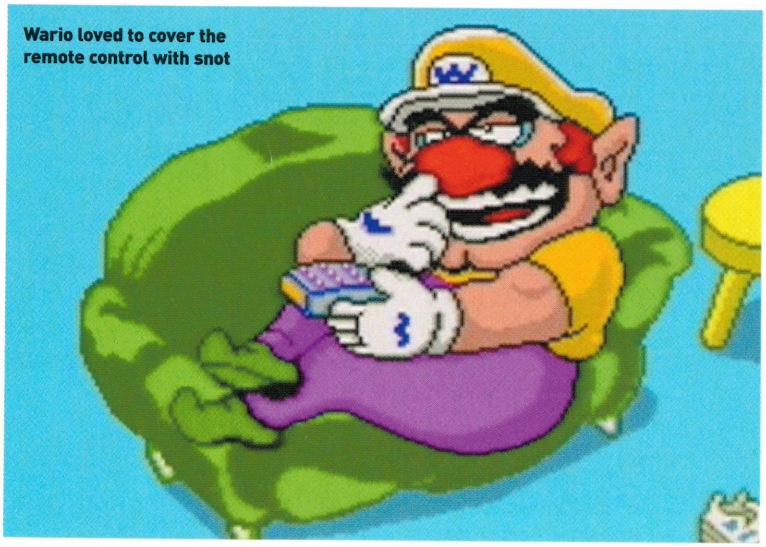
Forget in-depth tutorials too because all the mini-games involve quick button combos here or precision timing there. You won't have time to stop and think as your brain gets nanoseconds to read the instructions and your instinct does the rest. Beat one of Wario's friends and it's on to the next bunch of challenges, with even more nail-biting tasks to beat as you race against the clock.

❑ Small dogs – always full of surprises

Simplicity is what *Wario Ware* is all about, but it's not just how the games play, it's also how they look. Ranging from the basic NES 8-bit look of *Zelda* and *Super Mario Bros.* to 16-bit *F-Zero* and later Virtual Boy action, it's a blast from the past and retro-heads are certainly going to dig this.

Being the maverick of the Nintendo world it also comes as no surprise to find out that the bosses in Wario's game are miles away from the kind of giant creatures we are used to battling. Hammering a nail without it bending, blowing up space rock in a given time, hitting baseballs blasted from a machine – they're all as mad as they sound.

If fast and furious gaming on the go gets you all sweaty palmed don't be shy, *Wario Ware*'s got your name written all over it. **Tim Street** NOM

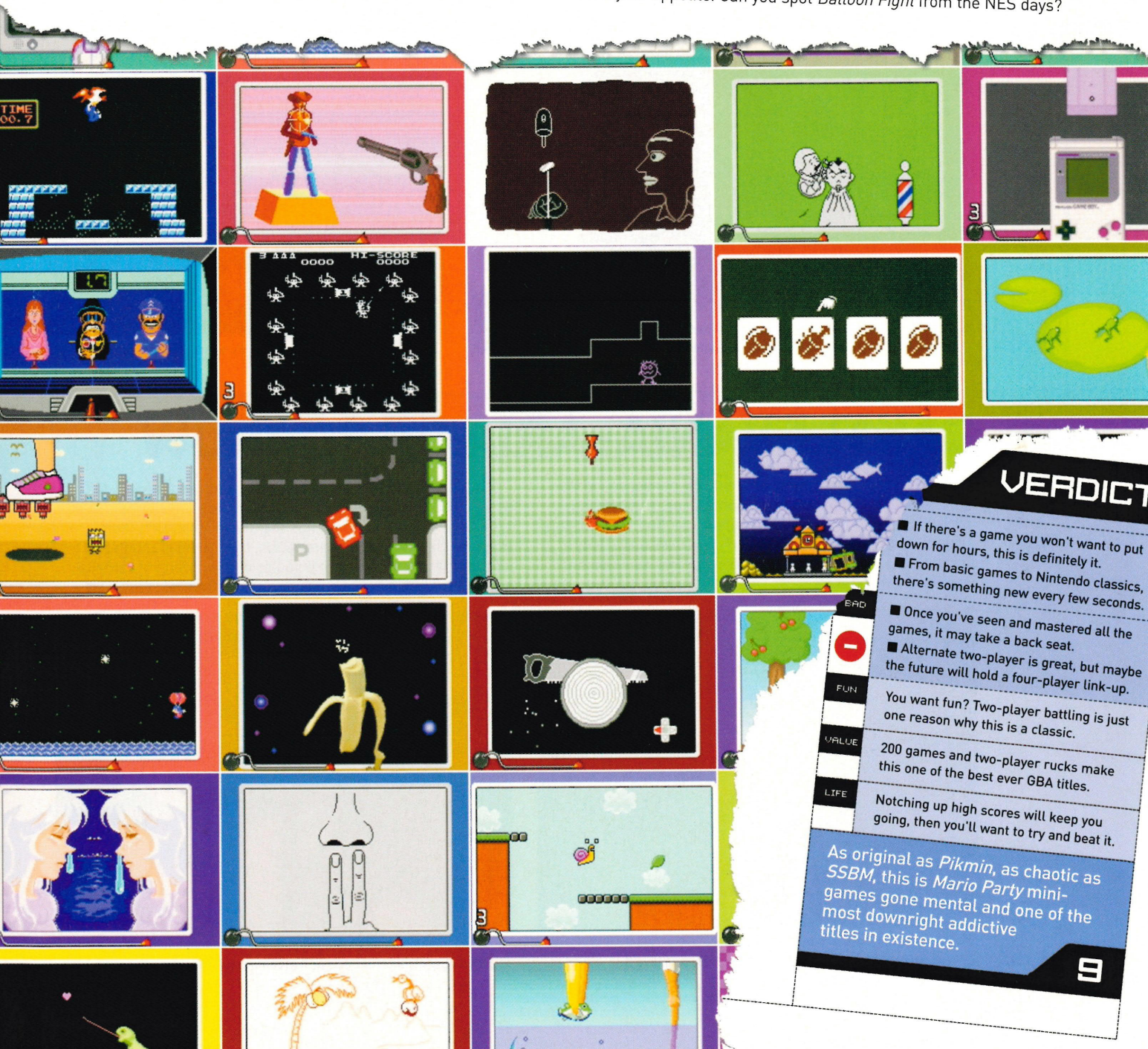


Wario loved to cover the remote control with snot

GAME BOY ADVANCE SP GAME BOY ADVANCE

TWO TONS OF POWER

Last month we showed you a selection of Wario's wicked mini-games, but as the cart is jam-packed with 200, we decided we couldn't go another month without showing you some more to whet your appetite. Can you spot *Balloon Fight* from the NES days?



VERDICT

- If there's a game you won't want to put down for hours, this is definitely it.
- From basic games to Nintendo classics, there's something new every few seconds.
- Once you've seen and mastered all the games, it may take a back seat.
- Alternate two-player is great, but maybe the future will hold a four-player link-up.

BAD	
FUN	You want fun? Two-player battling is just one reason why this is a classic.
VALUE	200 games and two-player rucks make this one of the best ever GBA titles.
LIFE	Notching up high scores will keep you going, then you'll want to try and beat it.

As original as *Pikmin*, as chaotic as *SSBM*, this is *Mario Party* mini-games gone mental and one of the most downright addictive titles in existence.

9

Price: £29.99

Release: Out Now

Publisher: Activision

Verdict: 6

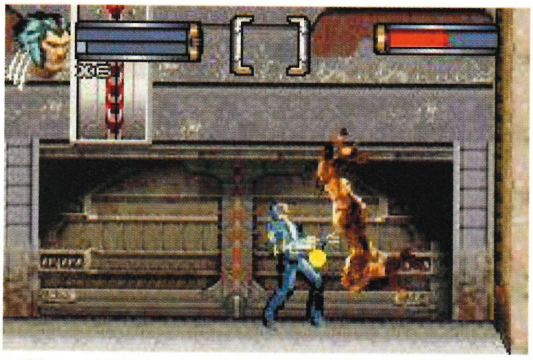
X-MEN 2: WOLVERINE'S REVENGE

It's a film license. Of a comic book character. And it's not complete rubbish. In this case you're guiding Wolverine on some mission or other.

Anyway, you can pick up enough abilities to keep things fresh, like climbing walls with your claws, and unlock Danger Room scenarios for later use. Wolvie's Healing Factor allows you to recover health and his Feral Rage is devastating when it kicks in.

There are also Scent Items for tracking specific enemies and in a novel touch, the camera can zoom out for a broader view.

But the shine soon wears off, revealing an average platformer. It's not as good as *Iron Man*, but more fun than the GameCube version. **Kingsley Singleton** NOM



❑ Wolverine battles Sabertooth in glorious low resolution. It's none too taxing, but better than the GameCube outing

Price: £29.99

Release: Out Now

Publisher: Konami

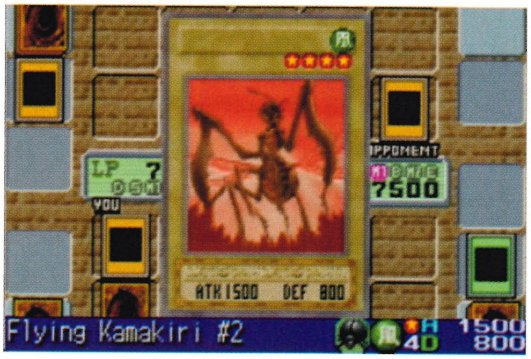
Verdict: 7

YU-GI-OH! STAIRWAY TO THE DESTINED DUEL

No story line, no platform jumping, no shooting, no puzzles, but if it's red-hot *Yu-Gi-Oh!* card-battling action you're looking for then *Stairway to the Destined Duel* is just about the most definitive game you could wish for.

Your job is to create a deck full of vicious monsters, cool magic attacks and sneaky traps and then try to outwit your opponent on the field of battle. There are around 1,000 in the game and you must work your way across the country, taking on all comers until you emerge victorious. It's perfect for *Yu-Gi-Oh!* fans, but if you're new to the game this may be a bit daunting. **Dominic Wint** NOM

❑ It's now clear that card-collecting rots your tiny brain



❑ At least these electronic cards won't get nicked at school

Price: £29.99

Release: Out Now

Publisher: Konami

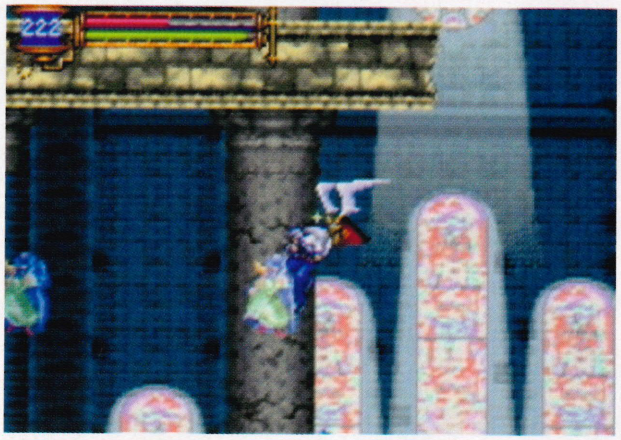
Verdict: 8

CASTLEVANIA: ARIA OF SORROW

The third *Castlevania* game on GBA places you in the shoes of college student, Soma Cruz. After losing consciousness during a solar eclipse, you find yourself in a strange castle populated by weird creatures and tricky puzzles. You must do your best to scour the mansion and uncover the mysteries.

This is an excellent and involving adventure that will suit action RPG fans down to the ground. There are plenty of creatures to kill and Soma has the ability to absorb their powers. Like previous incarnations, this game is tough and somewhat unforgiving, but if you're in the mood for vampire hunting then this is just what you need. **Dominic Wint** NOM

❑ *Castlevania* games are usually very good value and *Aria of Sorrow* is no exception. Vampire hunters everywhere will love it



❑ Trapped in the strange mansion, Soma Cruz has to deal with death-dispensing undead creatures and hideous interior decorating

LOG ON
www.thq.com

IN BRIEF
The *GT Advance* series continues, this time returning to the tarmac. Win GT tournaments, earning new hair-raising quick motors and upgrade parts. The graphics may not have advanced much since the first game, but the gameplay has been fine-tuned, making for a great GBA racer.

Data saves to battery back-up

DETAILS

Price:
£29.99

Release:
23 May

Publisher:
THQ

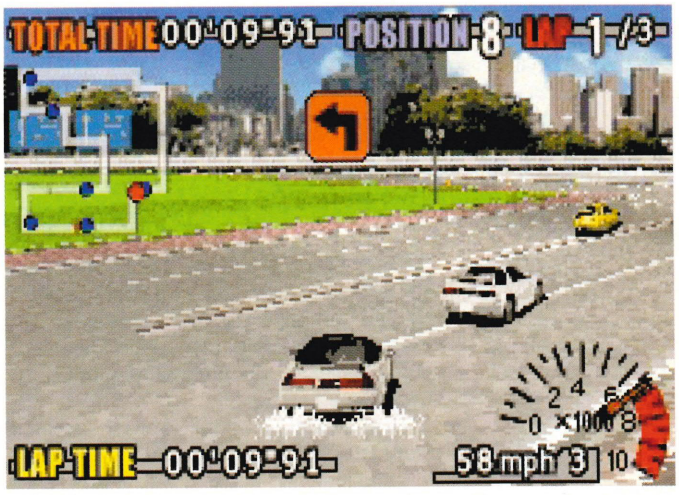
GT ADVANCE 3: PRO CONCEPT RACING

THE THIRD EDITION OF THQ'S GBA RACER HAS ARRIVED AND IT'S BEEN TUNED-UP, FRESHLY SPRAYED AND REFINED ALL OVER THE SHOP.

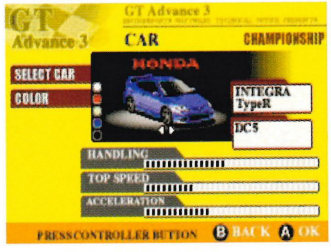
There are loads of racing games for the GBA – many of them very good – but hardly any force you to think about racing lines, braking points, cornering speeds or any other aspects of real-life racing.

This is where *GT Advance 3* makes a difference. From the word 'Go' at the start of a race, to the moment you cross the finish line, this is much more realistic racer than most other GBA efforts. You'll have to watch your rev counter when on the starting grid, making sure you get the right engine pace for a good start without too much wheel-spin. You'll need to pay attention to which way the next bend turns and position yourself for a racing line; braking at the wrong time will either slow you down too much, or send you spinning off the track. The whole handling package has been put together very well, with just the level of refinement you'd expect from the third instalment in the *GT Advance* series.

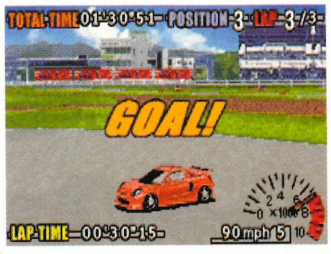
GT Advance 3 delivers in the content department too, with over 90 real-life cars to unlock by winning races and a whopping 46 tracks to race on, too. Don't be put off by the old-fashioned Mode 7 environments, this is a great racer to play and with all those cars and tracks, this should keep any petrol-head entertained for weeks. **Mike Jackson**



❑ **There it is, the same little arrow that always pops up telling you which way to steer your motor. But what if all the arrows were lying, eh? What then?**



❑ **Design your dream car then go show some ladies – just like *Max Power*!**



❑ **Finish! The graphics aren't great, but winning is all that matters here**

❑ **Aaargh! Beaten to the line by what looks like an orange Mk.3 Ford Escort. The shame! Bet he's got the leopard skin trim and underlight, too...**

VERDICT

GOOD
- Excellent handling that feels far more genuine than most other GBA racers.
- They may only be 2D sprites, but it's still highly satisfying building a dream car.

BAD
- These graphics are old. Compared to *V-Rally 3*, it looks rough around the edges.
- The way cars spin out is a bit strange, like it's been caught in a tornado.

Ignore the flat environments, this game plays so much better than it looks. It's the best in the *GT Advance* series so far and is surely one for all racers.

8

LOG ON

www.splintercell.com/uk

IN BRIEF

Splinter Cell on GBA is much more than a crap 2D platformer based on a good GameCube game. Ubi Soft have transformed a great 3D stealth title into a highly enjoyable 2D game. Sneak past guards unnoticed and complete mission objectives as you work your way through the intriguing political story line.

Data saves to battery back-up

DETAILS

Price: **£29.99**

Release: **6 June**

Publisher: **Ubi Soft**

SPLINTER CELL

SAM FISHER IS UP TO MORE STEALTHY TRICKS, HIDING IN CLOSETS, EVADING GUARDS AND SNOOPING AROUND IN THE DARK ON THE GBA.

If you've read our GameCube review of *Splinter Cell* on p56-59, you'll already know that Sam Fisher means business. But how well do his stealthy espionage antics convert to the GBA's small screen?

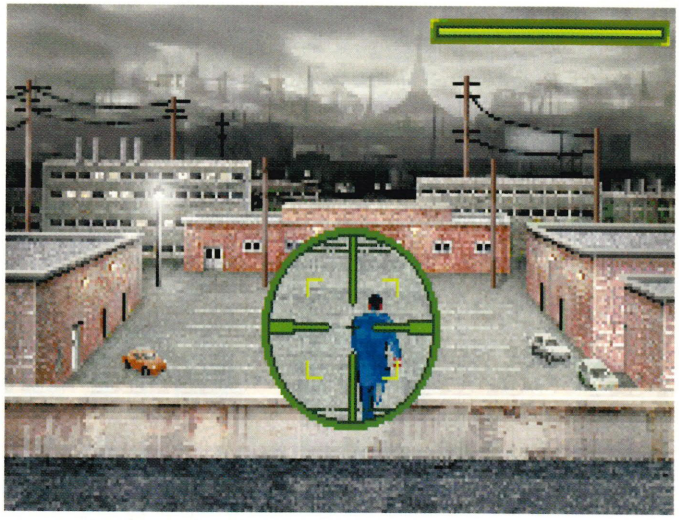
The handheld version follows the same story line, which involves Fisher's investigation into the activities of Russian Leader, President Nikoladze, after the disappearance of two undercover agents.

The game starts off basic, with no soldiers to worry about and appears to be a lazy 2D platformer. But delve a little deeper and the stealth elements emerge. If guards see you, they'll either attack or run off to trigger the alarms. Fail to deactivate them within about ten seconds and your mission is over.

You can get past guards in a number of ways: hide in dark corners until they pass; use a Smoke Grenade and sneak by; knock them out; or go all-out aggressive and pop a cap in their head. You can use night-vision and infra-red goggles, too – just like in the GameCube game.

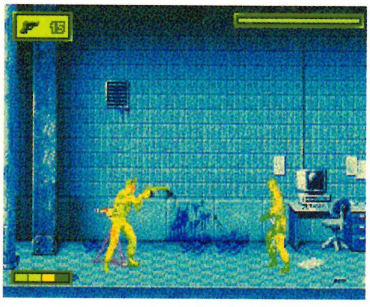
And by connecting this up to the home-console version of *Splinter Cell* you can download five extra levels to the GBA, on top of the 11 already in the game.

Splinter Cell is a great-looking, highly playable game and most of all, a worthy handheld version of its bigger brother. **Mike Jackson** NOM

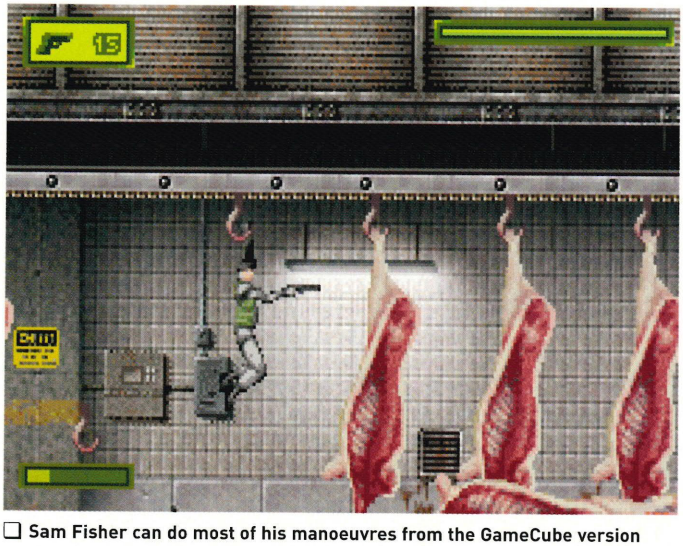


❑ **Everybody loves a bit of the old sniping and *Splinter Cell* is far superior to *Silent Scope* on the GBA – it's just a shame there's no satisfying rumble feature**

❑ **Sneak up on the guards and snap their necks. Stealth is the key to success**



❑ **The infra-red goggles give you an advantage over the guards. Now kill them**



❑ **Sam Fisher can do most of his manoeuvres from the GameCube version**

VERDICT

GOOD

- Great graphics and silky animation mean Fisher moves just like on GameCube.
- Check out the infra-red view! The grainy screen is fab. Again, close to GameCube.

BAD

- The first level isn't even worth playing. No guards, no stealth, no point.
- Throwing the grenades can be awkward. Better controls could have been used.

Splinter Cell on the GBA is a great action game that brings the tactical stealth from the cool GameCube version to the world of portable gaming.

8

Price: £29.99

Release: Out Now

Publisher: Ubi Soft

Verdict: 4

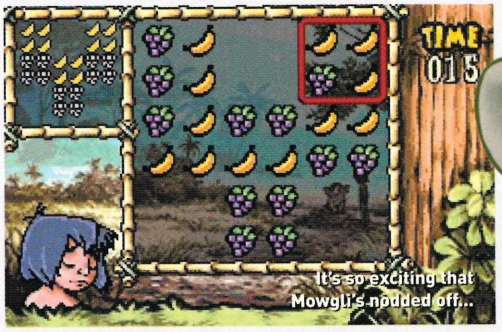
THE JUNGLE BOOK 2

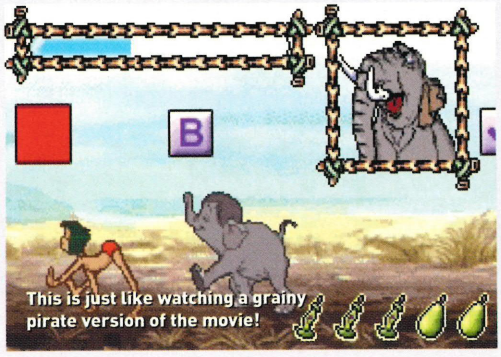
THE JUNGLE MAY BE MASSIVE, BUT IT'S NOT WICKED.

We haven't seen the *Jungle Book 2* movie yet and suddenly we don't want to – assuming the game is a faithful translation, Mowgli runs around in the forest solving easy tile-shifting puzzles for animals.

Run into a beast and the screen fuzzes out like *Pokémon*. Then the action heats up. Shift the tiles! Line up the cherries! Oh my lord, we've only got 45 seconds to do it! If you can take any more excitement, there are also mini-games. Bash all the buttons to stop the snake hypnotising you. You know – the one with the funny eyes.

Tile-shifting maniacs who also quite like Disney's *The Jungle Book* will be glued to their GBAs. Chances are, that's not you. It's certainly not us. **Dean Scott** NOM





Price: £29.99

Release: Out Now

Publisher: Electronic Arts

Verdict: 4

007 NIGHTFIRE

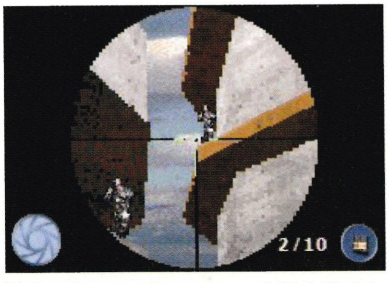
WE BET BOND'S GBA DOES FAR COOLER STUFF THAN THIS – SHOOTING POISON DARTS... STUFF LIKE THAT.

Let's say we built a house of jelly. It may well be the finest house of jelly ever, but there'd be no point – you couldn't live there. Without function, its form is irrelevant. *007 NightFire* on GBA makes great strides for a handheld First Person Shooter, but in the greater scheme of things it's a piece of crap. Simple as that.

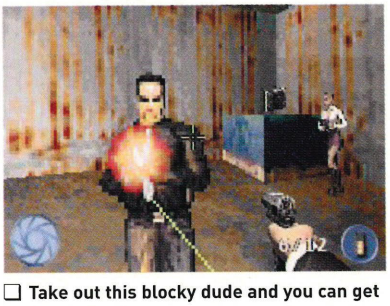
To make for an approximation of 3D, the graphics here have to look like fuzzy grey Lego. Movement is sluggish and all the enemies look like the kind of cardboard standees you see in your local video shop.

Bond's got some cool gadgets and the locations are varied, but it just feels like a massive compromise to be playing this on a handheld machine instead of a home console. And there's no multiplayer, so stick with *Duke Nukem Advance*. **Dean Scott** NOM

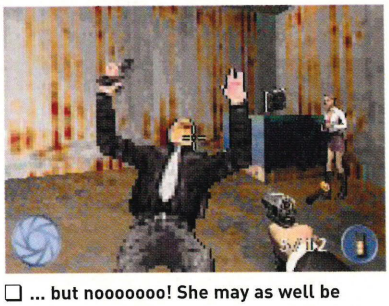
❑ This machine-gun will destroy cardboard cutouts. What? They're meant to be real?



❑ Tsk! They put in a scope and think it's job done. It's not good enough any more, EA



❑ Take out this blocky dude and you can get to the short-skirted Bond girl in the corner...



❑ ... but nooooooo! She may as well be made of Lego, for all the curves we can see

Price: £29.99

Release: Out Now

Publisher: THQ

Verdict: 4

REVENGE OF SHINOBI

WE WILL HAVE REVENGE ON THE PEOPLE THAT MADE THIS TERRIBLE DIRGE.

Briefly, we were excited – there's been a cool *Revenge of Shinobi* before on the Mega Drive... but this isn't it. This is some kind of ninja mistake that needs to take its own life.

It's a side-scrolling platformer, starring a shuriken-wielding ninja, but almost everything is wrong. The controls are sloppy as hell and the gameplay is dull. Run along, stab someone, flip a switch, stab more people. It gets very tedious incredibly quickly and you have to use a horrible password-save system.

Ninjas are supposed to kill with style and stalk in the shadows, but there's none of that here. There are idiotic enemies who walk into your swinging sword, but that's not the same thing, is it? Wrong, wrong, wrong! **Dean Scott**

❑ So bad it hurts: this guy's either got rickets or he's making like an Egyptian. Either way it doesn't make for a fun experience on your GBA

❑ Worst animation ever: nobody jumps like that, unless they've been to stage school – and we don't see an Equity card in this ninja's back pocket

Price: £29.99

Release: Out Now

Publisher: Infogrames

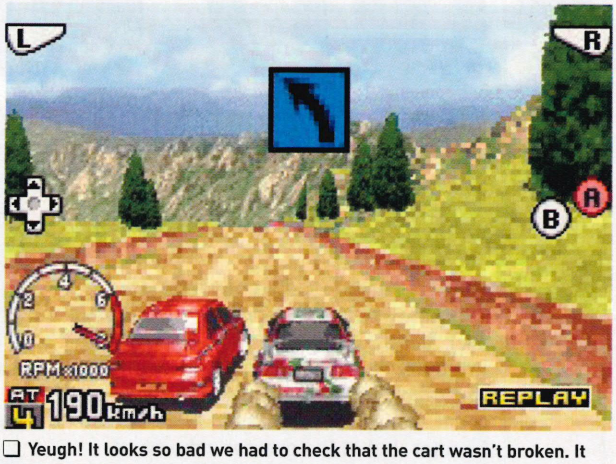
Verdict: 3

SEGA RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP

Sega is one of the world's best game makers. *Sega Rally* is the most prestigious brand in arcade racing. *Sega Rally Championship* on GBA is a total turd. Confused?

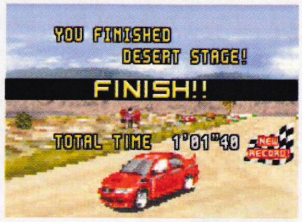
Don't be – the cars look okay, but that's as good as it gets – the track detail is so blocky and fuzzy you can hardly see where you're going; you're drifting around the bend, then you clip the horrific jumbled mess on the side because you were closer than you thought. There's an in-car view, but that makes the non-scenery come even closer. If you're looking for a GBA rally game, *V-Rally 3* is the one. **Dean Scott**

❑ You're going the wrong way! Listen to the arrows, they know everything



❑ Yeugh! It looks so bad we had to check that the cart wasn't broken. It wasn't, so that must mean our eyes weren't lying – shame on you, Sega

❑ The in-car view makes things even more blocky and confusing



❑ Now we can stamp on the cart to make sure it'll never work again

MEGA MAN BATTLE NETWORK 3

Price: **£29.99**

Release: **20 June**

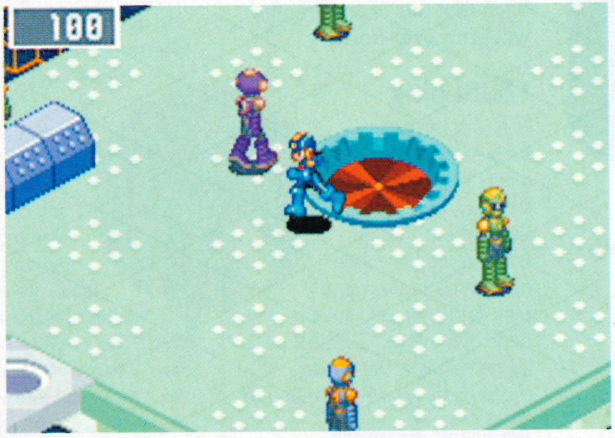
Publisher: **Capcom**

Verdict: **6**

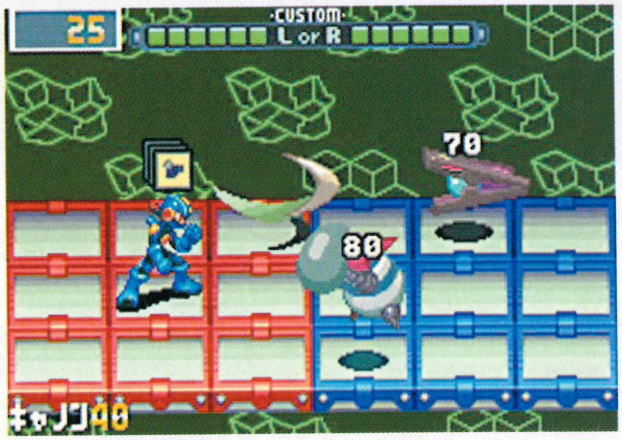
Mega Man's been around since the times of Jesus and most of his 8,000 or so games have been damn good fun. This latest one is no exception, but there's a fairly serious problem. It's virtually identical to *Battle Network 2*, which itself was a dead-ringer for *Battle Network 1*.

Graphically, there's no difference. There are a few new weapons to call on as you zap virus after virus on the internet in an RPG style, but nothing significantly new. *Pokémon* got away with it for years, but *Battle Network* isn't as good.

Sure it's an impressive game in a quirky sort of way, and the visuals are pleasantly cyberpunk when you 'jack in' to the Net. Having *Blue* and *White* editions of the game adds new trading possibilities for multiplayer, but we're really bored with this now. **Dean Scott** NOM



❑ **Mega Man was shunned by his peers for bringing out so many games**



❑ **Once 'jacked-in' to the Net you take on viruses in an RPG style**

TOM AND JERRY IN INFURNAL ESCAPE

BY FAR THE BEST THING ABOUT THIS GAME IS THAT 'FUR' GAG IN THE TITLE.

Price: **£29.99**

Release: **Out Now**

Publisher: **Ubi Soft**

Verdict: **3**

In real life, cats kill mice really easily and leave them lying on your doormat with the guts hanging out. We wish Tom had killed Jerry years ago in the cartoon, because then this game wouldn't have existed.

You're Tom. You have to collect bones in levels full of nasty dogs. There are booby traps everywhere to slow you down, like big boxing gloves that pop up and hit you. And bear traps. Ha ha! Except it's not at all humourous.

It's a study of how not to make a platformer, in fact: constantly jumping on ledges you can't see and getting hit by stuff that should've missed you. The animation is awful and it's frustrating as hell. **Dean Scott** NOM

❑ **The final nail in the coffin: first they made Tom and Jerry speak, now they star in one of the worst platformers ever**

IRIDION 2

IT'S TOP-DOWN TOMFOOLERY ALL THE WAY IN THIS CORKING SHOOTER.

Price: **£29.99**

Release: **13 June**

Publisher: **Vivendi Universal**

Verdict: **7**

There's not much to say about *Iridion 2*, apart from 'wow' and 'oh'. 'Wow' because this top-down shoot-'em-up is a total stunner in the looks department – seriously, it's not a million miles from *Ikaruga* on GameCube.

The 'oh' part is the slightly disappointing gameplay. *Iridion 2* can get exciting when the bullets are flying around like a big ol' blizzard of doom, but much of the time it's quite pedestrian and not too far short of repetitive.

There are some neat ideas in here like opening and closing gates though and it suggests a truly classic shooter is possible on GBA. A good effort in all and much better than the first. **Dean Scott** NOM

❑ ***Iridion 2* is a great-looking shooter and the game plays well, too. It's just like the old days in the palm of your hand**

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LETTERS

nintendoletters@emap.com

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- **E-mail us:** nintendoletters@emap.com
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Top 100

Good job on the *Top 100 Games* magazine with the last issue of *NOM*. I had a good old look through and agreed/disagreed/called you names at your suggestions. My personal top three are *Zelda*, *Eternal Darkness* and *Metroid Prime*. Hope we get a chance to have our say if there's another one.

Dave Walker, Shepshed

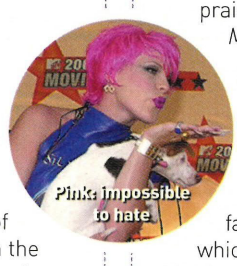
Glad you liked it Dave, we certainly had a few disagreements whilst choosing the running order. Not for number one though, that was an easy choice.

Bottom 100

What a load of rubbish! Your *Top 100* thing was totally bad. Why bother doing one now when there are only about a hundred GameCube games in total, and only about 15 of those are good. And as for *Zelda* at number one, yeah, like we couldn't see that one coming a mile off.

Jason Gardner, Liverpool

Zelda's at number one because it's the best GameCube game out there, no question. We know there are only about 100 GameCube titles at the moment, but we hope that this is an idea that will grow over time.



Pink: impossible to hate.

I hate pink

Is it just me or is Kirby one of the worst characters that Nintendo have ever created. What does he do? I reckon he's just a big lump of pink fat scraped from the floor of Nintendo's developers. I'd be happy if there were no more Kirby games ever again.

Ian Frank, Bradford

Perhaps a little harsh on the loveable rogue, but we have to agree that out of the entire roster of Nintendo stars, Kirby may well be the weakest of the lot.

Absolutely mental

Wario Ware, Inc. Mega Microgame$. Mental. What idiot, or genius, is responsible for this crazy game. All that Nintendo quality has got me salivating. One more game to add to my shopping list. Curse you Nintendo.

Frank Highman, Worthing

We love this game like we have loved no other. Turn back to p76 if you don't believe us.

Just admit you're wrong

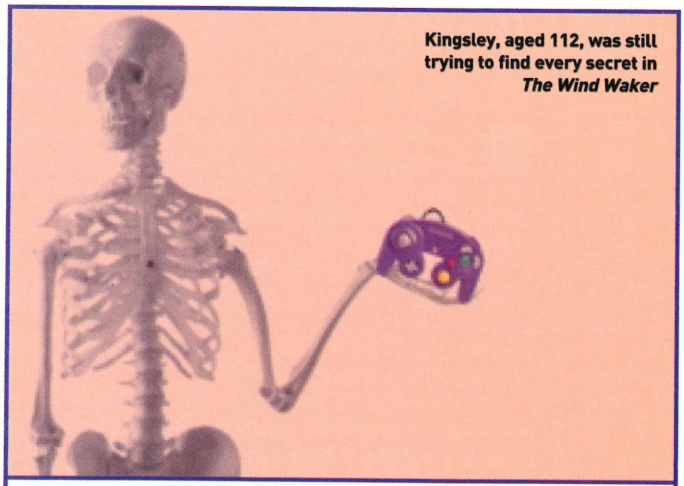
Why have you put *The Simpsons: Road Rage* in the TNT Wannabees? Sure, it has its faults, like the fairly odd graphics and the limited single player, which loses some of its appeal after getting a million, but it is pure plain fun. *Crazy Taxi* simply feels like driving a real cab, which isn't particularly fun, and gets kind of repetitive, all the areas being set in a city, rather than the variety of open and closed spaces in *S:RR*. So I think *S:RR* should be upgraded to a seven, simply for being the best taxi-sim available, and the fun-value of course.

Tommy Atkins, Royston

W-R-O-N-G! You're wrong, Tommy. Wrong.

Best in show

I've never really bothered to write in to any magazines, but now I feel it is essential that I do, because Nintendo and Retro Studios deserve all the praise that they get. *Metroid Prime* is a slice of gaming genius and should not be missed by any Nintendo fan. *Metroid Prime* is now one of my favourite games which is right up there with *The Legend of Zelda*. I know you will get many letters like this but I just want to make sure everyone that owns a GameCube out there buys a copy of this fantastic game that will last months or more.



Kingsley, aged 112, was still trying to find every secret in *The Wind Waker*

The search continues

I am a 70-year-old grandmother, almost 71 and a great fan of Nintendo together with my four grandchildren. I have a Nintendo 64 and of course a GameCube with about 18 games, some of those are my favourites, some are my grandchildrens' favourites. What I like about the GameCube is the memory card system. Each set of my grandchildren has their own memory card and when they visit me they can continue playing their own games. I also have a Game Boy Advance and an SP. My favourite game at the moment is Star Fox, but unfortunately I still have a full-time job so I can't play as much as I want to.

Johanna Harlev, Denmark

It's true – she sent us a copy of her driving licence as proof. Beat that if you can old people.

IDIOT OF THE MONTH

It *is* you!

After reading the Letters section in *NOM* 128 I thought to myself 'Idiot of the month? Me?', because there was nothing wrong with my letter, you didn't even answer my question! But then again I must be an idiot if I still read your magasine.
P.S. Who's the idiot of the month now?... because it sure ain't me!

Nicolas O'Brien, via e-mail

We answered your frankly stupid question and still you pester us with rubbish. Sit in the corner, your dunce's hat is in the post. Oh and it's 'magazine'.

Nicolas, you plonker! Use that spell checker before writing in

QUICKFIRE QUESTIONS

Is there going to be a gun for the GameCube?

Rob Archer, via e-mail
NOM: No

Will there be an N64 Player for GameCube?

Richard Watkinson, via e-mail
NOM: No

Do you need a copy of *A Link to The Past* on GBA to use the Tingle Tuner on *The Wind Waker*?

Josh Wiseman, Essex
NOM: No

Is there going to be a *Mario Tennis* or a *Mario Golf* game coming to GameCube soon?

Alex Noble, via e-mail
NOM: Yes

David Keyte, via e-mail

And now everybody knows. If you haven't already got it, then go out and buy it now, you will not be disappointed.

We fear change

In issue 128, you included a free mag that had the top 100 games on the GameCube, but *Star Fox Adventures* 25th? *Mario Party* 35th? Come on, they're classic games in their own right. What made you decide rankings like *Rocky* 10th and then *Madden NFL 2003* 20th? And then you changed some of the scores in the TNT Buyer's Guide; decreasing *Star Fox Adventures* to eight, along with *Tony Hawk's 3*, *SMB 2*, *Resident Evil* and *SUPER SMASH BROS. MELEE*! And then you made *SMB* and *Super Mario Sunshine* a nine? Why? And then you also increased other games by a point that are crap and put reasonable ones in the Trash Bin. Why did you do all that? CHANGE 'EM BACK TO WHAT THEY WERE BEFORE!

Alex Christian-Leahy, Surrey

We took the opportunity to have a bit of a clear up of our scores and there were some games that, in hindsight, aren't as good now as they were then. For example, *Tony 4* is far superior to *Tony 3*, *Zelda* blows *Star Fox* out of the water. We knew there'd be some disagreement, that was partly the point, but we've made our changes and we stick by them.

Dom 1, Mario 0

Even though Mario is my favourite video games character, I have to agree with Dom when he says that *Super Mario Sunshine* is over-rated. Yes, it is a good game, but it is somewhat lacking in the long term and I haven't even completed it yet! The game hasn't got much replay value, and some of the challenges, such as collecting Blue Coins, get pretty tedious.

Gianni Bufano, via e-mail

Dom appreciates your support, but he's currently trying to escape from the cage that he's been locked in since he aired his anti-Mario sentiments.

Get the shoehorn!

You now have quite a large TNT Buyer's Guide with GameCube games in it, but can we not have a GBA Buyer's Guide as there are far more GBA games than GameCube ones. There are so many games that I want to buy for GBA, but I want to see what you rated them.

Andrew Kirk, Glasgow

It's something we'd love to do but we just haven't got the space. Mr Publisher, can we have a bigger magazine please?

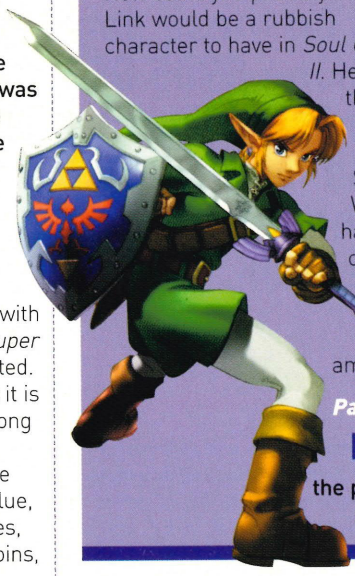
I double dare you!

I buy *NOM* every month and every single *Zelda* review I read is always good and nobody dares to say it's bad. In issue 128, p114 you said that *The Legend of Zelda: Majora's Mask* was 'a totally unforgettable classic' that isn't true, because I can't forget the poor ending. I think it was too short and annoying because you built it up so I expected something really hard exciting and good. It was so easy my brother who's six completed it.

LETTER OF THE MONTH

Doubting *NOM*

How could you possibly think that Link would be a rubbish character to have in *Soul Calibur II*. He's better than Heihachi and Spawn combined. While Sony and Microsoft have to make do with second-rate characters, Nintendo gamers are treated to an evening with a true legend. Even without the Bombs and the Bow he'd have been amazing. Link rocks.



Paul Davison, Great Barford

Hands up on that one, Paul. We were totally wrong to ever doubt the power of the hero from Hyrule – Link rocks whatever game he's in.

Eddie Barlow, York

Dare? It's not a case of 'dare', Eddie. *Zelda* games are pure genius, unless you count that dreadful interactive Panasonic CDi thing. Just because you didn't like *The Legend of Zelda: Majora's Mask* doesn't mean it's bad.

Movie stars

I've been a huge Nintendo fan for about two years now, but they've never made a decent movie before. The *Pokémon* ones were all rubbish and it would be nice to see something with either Link or Samus in it. PlayStation did it with *Tomb Raider* and *Final Fantasy*, so why can't Nintendo do the same?

William Stretton, Iver

Rumour has it that a *Metroid* movie is on the way but there's still very little information. If it's anything like the *Tomb Raider* movie then they should be ashamed of themselves.

We'll tell them

If you see Nintendo around, tell them to do *Star Fox* GBA.

Anon, via e-mail

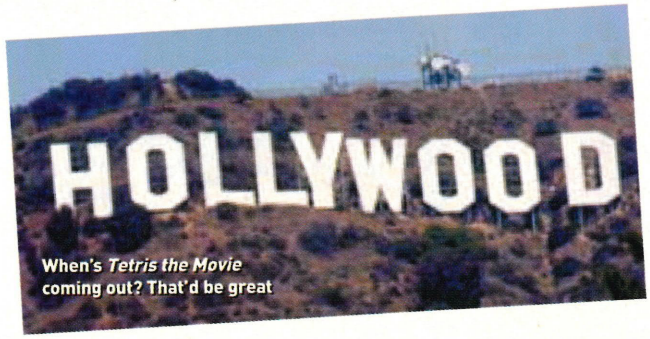
Will do, Anon. Great name – bit like Ganon.

Stolen sun

I'm really depressed. I've lost one of my favourite games on GBA. The game is *Golden Sun* and now it's gone. I think one of my friends has stolen it, but I wasn't sure, so I went to his house and he said he hasn't. None of my other friends would have taken it because they don't have GBAs. Anyway, I was wondering if you could send me a copy to play since it was really good and I don't want to spend £30 again. Anyway, please e-mail me back so I can give you my address.

Jayce Mackey, somewhere

If only you'd asked last week. We had loads, but your shady mate turned up and nicked them all.



When's *Tetris the Movie* coming out? That'd be great

win all this cool stuff

What a competition this month. Wow. If you want a chance to win the prizes on these pages just phone **0905 053 110**, then add the number at the end. So if you're entering the *Dakar 2* competition, dial **0905 053 1102**. Answer the question, leave your name, address and telephone number and we'll call you on 12 June if you've won. Don't forget to ask permission from whoever pays the bill before calling.

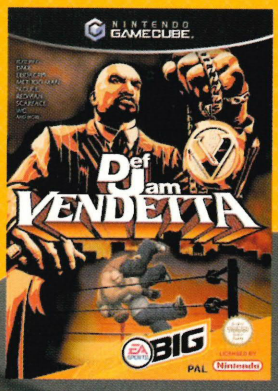
1

1. Win cool *Def Jam Vendetta* goodies

This competition could transform your bedroom from a stinking fleapit into a home entertainment shrine capable of turning all of your mates green with envy. Thanks to Electronic Arts, we've got a top-of-the-range Anthony Gallo Nucleus Micro surround speaker system complete with active sub-woofer. We're also throwing in a Sony receiver and a Homemix DJ system. You'll also get a copy of *Def Jam Vendetta.* That's well over £1,500 worth of stuff. Nine runners-up will also receive a copy of the game. Just answer this easy question and get ringing.

Q. Which of these artists is not signed to Def Jam Records?

a. **Method Man**
b. **Redman**
c. **Eminem**



01 UP FOR GRABS

2

04 UP FOR GRABS

3

03 UP FOR GRABS

2. *Dakar 2* and Logitech wheels

Thanks to Acclaim we've got four copies of *Dakar 2* as well as Logitech Force Feedback Steering wheels to give away. All you have to do is answer this simple question:

Q. We all know where Paris is, but where is Dakar?

a. **In da car park**
b. **In da garage**
c. **In Senegal**

3. *Wario Ware, Icn. Mega Microgame$*

It's the most mental GBA game ever and also one of the best. Flip to p76 to read all about it and then have ago at winning one of three copies, thanks to Nintendo.

Q. Which of these is not a mini-game in *Wario Ware*?

a. **Nose Picking**
b. **Pong**
c. **Dr Mario**

4. X-Men 2: Wolverine's Revenge

Thanks to Activision, we've got three copies of the GBA and GameCube versions of Logan's latest adventure to give away.

Q. Who plays Wolverine in the *X-Men* movies?

a. **Sylvester Stallone**
b. **Colin Farrell**
c. **Hugh Jackman**

5. Red Faction II

Get into the demolition business with *Red Faction II*. Thanks to THQ we've got five copies to give to you if you can answer this question:

Q. What is the name of the dictator in *Red Faction II*?

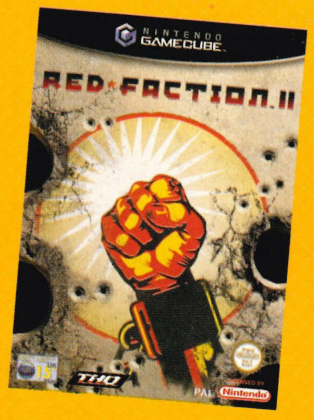
a. **Sopot**
b. **Dopot**
c. **Nopot**

4

03 UP FOR GRABS

5

05 UP FOR GRABS



ISSUE 127 WINNERS

Competition 1
- *Jane Haimes, South Wirral (1st)*
- *Anthony Johnson, Roehampton*
- *Kerry Brook, Inverness*
- *Kenneth Graham, Wirral*
- *Jed Stone, Fareham*
- *Paul Hornsby, County Durham*
- *Tarek Hennequin, Shepperton*
- *Tom Good, Peterborough*
- *Robert Preeceworth, Bradford*
- *Chris Bowen, Bristol*
- *Ian Penney, Eastleigh*

Competition 2
- *Elliot Miller, Holywell*
- *Robert Nelson, Stroud*
- *Kenneth Greenway, Essex*

Competition 3
- *Huraya Mohammed, Woolwich*
- *Timothy Irons, Newport*
- *Chris Hill, Rye*

Competition 4
- *Peter Bricesmith, Northampton*
- *Janet Divine, Cardiff*
- *James Packer, Hastings*
- *Danny Atkins, Lymington*
- *Stuart Fitzpatrick, Manchester*

Competition 5
- *Richard West, Huntingdon*
- *J Jesson, East Sussex*
- *Nathan Langridge, Braintree*
- *Alfie Daley, Hounslow*
- *Andrew Patterson, Glasgow*

GBA SP Competition
- *Liam Bennett, Evesham*
- *Chris Morgan, Deal*
- *Patrick Winder, Thames Ditton*
- *Debbie Allen, Margate*
- *Lisa Price, South Norwood*

Terms and conditions: Calls cost 50p per minute. Calls last two minutes. Please get permission from the bill payer before calling. *Nintendo Official Magazine* and the companies providing prizes accept no liability for injuries or damage sustained while using competition prizes.
All entries for the competitions must be received by 06/06/03 to qualify.
The winner will receive the stated prize from the competition they have entered. If for any reason beyond the promoter's control it is not possible to provide the stated prize, the promoter reserves the right to award an alternative prize of no lesser value.
The promoter's choice of prize is final. There is no cash alternative available. No entries can be returned and the promoter will enter into no correspondence. Prize draw takes place on 12/06/03 and the winner will be notified within one day of the draw. The winner will be chosen at random from the correct entries received. Open to UK and overseas residents. We reserve the right to use the winners in any publicity. No employees of EMAP or other companies involved in this promotion are eligible to enter. No purchase necessary. The Editor's decision is final. Only one entry per household.
The promoter excludes responsibility for applications that are lost/delayed/incomplete.

You can also send your entries by post. Please write the competition number clearly at the top of the envelope or postcard. If, for example, you are entering the *Def Jam Vendetta* competition, write to: **Competition 1, *Nintendo Official Magazine*, Bushfield House, Orton Centre, Peterborough, Cambridgeshire, PE2 5UW.**

HIGH SCORES & CHALLENGES

It's a call to arms this month, Nintendo gamers. Not only can you win a cool Joytech controller just by topping the chart, but you can also have a go at stemming the tide of prizes heading for High Score King, Dave Every's house.

1 THE WIND WAKER: WINDFALL ISLAND, FEWEST BOMBS NEEDED TO SINK ALL THREE BATTLESHIPS.

Splosh! Ka-boom! Splosh! We loved the superb *Battleships* mini-game on Windfall Island so much that we almost forgot to get on with the main quest. It's easy to find, on the ground floor of the Ferris Wheel building, so get entering, adventurers.

It'll cost you ten Rupees a time, but you can easily find more in the many jars hidden around the island. Get 20 or under and you'll get a piece of heart container.

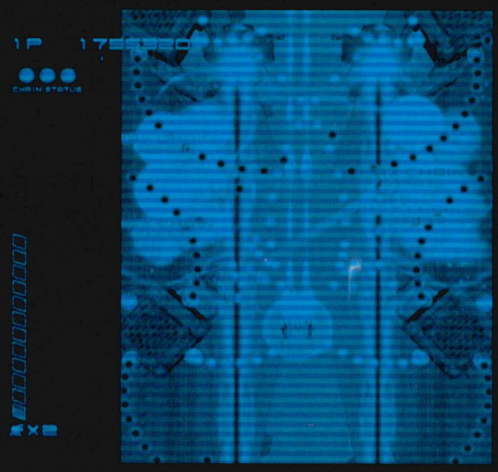
1. Kingsley Singleton 15
2. Dominic Wint 17
3. Tim Street 19
4. Dean Scott 20
5. Mike Jackson 22

2 IKARUGA: NORMAL MODE, TRIAL MODE, GET THE HIGHEST SCORE ON THE FIRST STAGE.

We. Love. *Ikaruga*. It's as simple as that. But it's a tough, scary game, as the stains on the *NOM* Games Room sofa will testify. Just begin the game on Normal mode, then hit Trial mode – this means you should make it to the end of the level with ease...

Trial mode means you get unlimited craft, but you'll need to stay alive and rack up the combos if you want to hit the top of the table. Send us the score that's shown after defeating the first boss.

1. Mike Jackson 699,200
2. Dean Scott 681,300
3. Dominic Wint 620,650
4. Kingsley Singleton 550,100
5. Tim Street 513,950



3 PIKMIN: CHALLENGE MODE, GROW THE MOST PIKMIN BEFORE NIGHTFALL ARRIVES AT IMPACT SITE.

With the return of Olimar plus one in *Pikmin 2*, we decided it was high time to revisit the lovely little Pikmin and give you lot a chance to prove your sprouting skills, too. So, it's off to the Impact Site on Challenge mode to see who can grow the most.

First you'll need to unlock the Challenge mode, activated by reaching the end of the adventure or saving once you've found all three Onions. Now just open up the Impact Site and get growing.

1. Tim Street 133
2. Dominic Wint 125
3. Kingsley Singleton 123
4. Dean Scott 112
5. Mike Jackson 99

4 SUPER MONKEY BALL 2: HIGHEST SCORE ON MONKEY TARGET, 15-ROUND MATCH, ONE MONKEY.

Monkeys. Plastic balls. The two usually go together like peaches and aviation fuel. Except in *SMB2* that is, because there's no limit to how much fun you can have rolling your primates here. Anyway, this month's *SMB2* challenge is all about happy landings...

Make sure you pick the 15-Round match and use only one monkey, it doesn't matter which one. Go for the biggest scores with the Magnet Ball and send us a photo or video of your score.

1. Mike Jackson 5,210
2. Dominic Wint 4,080
3. Tim Street 3,820
4. Kingsley Singleton 3,760
5. Dean Scott 2,200

RESULT TABLES

1 TIMESPLITTERS 2: ARCADE AMATEUR LEAGUE, GO FOR THE MOST KILLS IN NIGHT SHIFT.

What's this? A *TimeSplitters 2* challenge that Dave Every didn't win? Has the world gone mad? Has the Earth stopped turning? No, it's all down to trigger-happy James Norton and his killing skills.

1. James Norton 58
2. Robert Steele 54
3. Peter Curtis 48
4. Dave Every 47
5. Jeff Pye 45

2 TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR 2003: STROKE PLAY, GET THE BEST SCORE IN LOVELY PRINCEVILLE

Ha-ha! In your face again, Every! Colin Quinn is king of the green. It was a close run thing, though, with Every bottling it on the final dog-leg and breaking all his clubs in frustration. Better luck next time, Dave.

1. Colin Quinn 46
2. Dave Every 47
3. Steven Ferguson 48
4. Mark Watkin-Beamond 52
5. Neil Grace 53

3 BURNOUT: SINGLE RACE ON INTERSTATE TRACK, FASTEST TOTAL TIME OVER THREE LAPS

What no Dave Every? Did someone steal your copy of *Burnout*, Dave, or was it just that you were too busy entering all the other challenges? Get in there, Philip Ward, you got some mad driving skills.

1. Philip Ward 6:24
2. Steve Foreshaw 6:52
3. Nathan Hale 6:53
4. Hakan Mattack 6:57
5. Edward Miller 7:01

4 SUPER MONKEY BALL: HIGHEST SCORE ON ONE-PLAYER, INTERMEDIATE LEVEL

Noooo! Just when we thought things were all square, Every rolls his monkey into top spot. That's dedication for you, as Roy Castle used to say. Nice one, Dave, but please get some fresh air before next month.

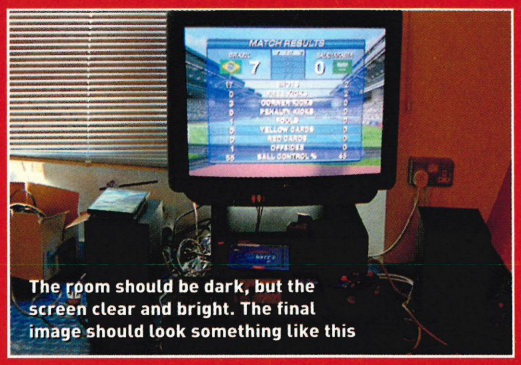
1. Dave Every 588,679
2. Geraint Richards 548,375
3. Kevina Moore 523,756
4. Michael Wood 467,311
5. Robert Brear 433,909

CHEATS NEVER PROSPER

There's no doubt that less-skilled Nintendo GameCube players will try to use cheats to get into our exclusive high score tables.

Cheats should not be used to help with challenges unless we say so. Using import games is also strictly forbidden as they can often give players an unfair advantage. Don't cheat, chaps. It's not big and it's certainly not clever.

PHOTOGRAPH YOUR TV



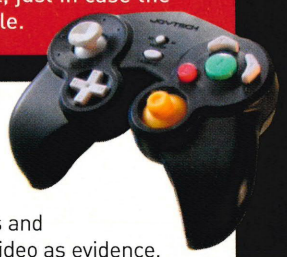
The room should be dark, but the screen clear and bright. The final image should look something like this

Using a camera to take a photo of your top score on a TV can be tricky, but follow these simple instructions and you should be fine.

1. Make the room as dark as possible. Draw the curtains, turn out the lights and take the photo standing at an angle to the television screen.

2. Turn off the flash or the television screen will appear black in the developed photograph. And you don't want that to happen, do you?

3. Take more than one shot, just in case the first photograph is unreadable.



WHAT YOU HAVE TO DO TO WIN

When you've achieved a top score on one of our challenges and got your hands on a photo or video as evidence, pack it up and send it to the *NOM* address. If you manage to get the best score next month we'll send you a smart Joytech Advanced Controller for your GameCube, so it's definitely worth the extra effort.

High Scores and Challenges, Nintendo Official Magazine, Bushfield House, Orton Centre, Peterborough, Cambridgeshire, PE2 5UW.

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CLUB NOM

FREE NINTENDO NEWS STRAIGHT TO YOUR MOBILE

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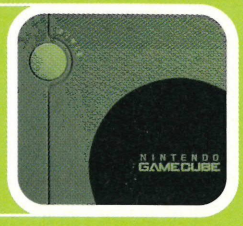
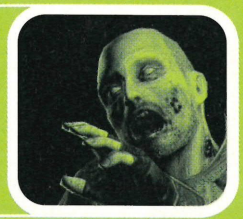
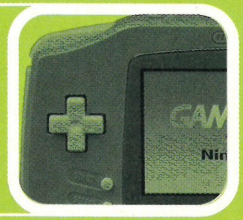


FREE! GAMES RELEASE UPDATES



PLUS! EXCLUSIVE COMPETITIONS



WHAT YOU NEED TO DO

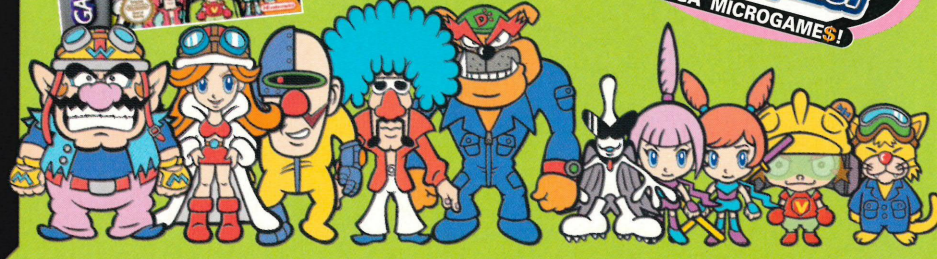
TO JOIN, JUST BEGIN YOUR TEXT WITH THE WORD 'CLUB'

AFTER THAT, INCLUDE YOUR NAME AND AGE

SEND IT TO 84070 THEN SIT BACK AND ENJOY THE SERVICE

WIN WARIO GAMES!

WE'VE GOT THREE COPIES OF *WARIO WARE, INC.* UP FOR GRABS. TO GET YOUR FREE ENTRY INTO OUR EXCLUSIVE *WARIO* COMPETITION, JOIN UP WITH *CLUB NOM.**



*Existing *Club NOM* members will automatically be entered into the *Wario Ware, Inc.* competition.

Terms and Conditions: the cost to join *Club NOM* is 25p. This is a one-off charge to join the club. You will then receive a text message from *Club NOM* asking you to select your favourite games genre. You reply to *Club NOM* selecting your genre. There is no charge for this second message or additional texts from *Club NOM*. Please note that your own operator (02, Vodafone, T-Mobile, Orange, etc.) may charge you to send and receive texts as part of your mobile package. Existing *Club NOM* members will be automatically entered into the *Wario Ware, Inc.* competition.

MEGA MOBILE RINGTONES & LOGOS

top chart hits

TATU - All The Things She Said	11309
Justin Timberlake - Cry Me a River	11319
Oasis - Songbird	11976
Kelly Rowland - Stole	11353
Sean Paul - Gimmie the Light	11440
Big Brovaz - OK	11387
Good Charlotte- Lifestyles of the Rich	11497
Cam'ron - Hey Ma	11906
Counting Crows - Big Yellow Taxi	11371
Kelly Osbourne - Shut Up	11228
Jaimeson feat. Angel Blu - True	11450
Beenie Man - Street Life	11354
Jay-Z - '03 Bonnie & Clyde	11201
Jurgen Vries - The Opera Song	11540
Craig David - Hidden Agenda	11332
Lemon Jelly - Weather For Ducks	11067
Wildhearts - Stormy in the North	11541
Girls Aloud - Sound Of The Undergd	11306
Cheeky Girls - Cheeky Song	11049
Eminem - Lose Yourself	11065
Daniel Bedingfield - Not The One	11063

new releases

Blue Song - Mint Royale	11916
Boys Of Summer - DJ Sammy	11918
Cry Baby - Tricity	11921
Dinosaur Adventure 3D - Underworld	11923
DJ Nation - Nukleuz DJ	11924
Dreamer - CK And Dream Team	11927
El Luna En Tu Mirada - Ry Cooder	11929
Eye Of The Hurricane - New Flesh	11930
Fortress Europe - Asian Dub Foundatn	11932
Freeloader - Driftwood	11933
Baby Doll - NERD	11913
Dreamy Days - Roots Manuva	11928
Automatic - Sarah Whatmore	11912
A Day Like Today - Tom McRae	11909
Beautiful - Christina Aguilera	11914
Born To Try - Delta Goodrem	11917
Breakdown - Sinead Quinn	11919
Britney - Busted	11920
Damn These Hungry Times- Cousteau	11922
Dream Its Over - Sixpence nt Richer	11926
Dont Ask Me - Ok Go	11925
Tic Toc - Leanne Rimes	11510
Ring - Alexia	11511
River - Barry Manilow	11512
Truck On - Simple Kid	11525
Land Of The Living - Milk Inc	11408
Can I Go Now - Jennifer Love Hewitt	11374
Cant Go Back - Sissel	11375
Do I Have To Cry 4 You - Nick Carter	11378
Dont Worry - Appleton	11380
I Wont Forget You - Ze Malibu Kids	11382
Cant Rock The Mic - P A Y Go Crew	11376

team themes

Celtic - Fields of Athenray	3547
The Wild Rover	5310
Vindaloo	1514
Round The Mountain - Arsenal	4131
Glory, Glory - Man United	4134
Here We Go	4135
Blowing Bubbles - West Ham	4136
Marching On Together - Leeds	3541
Youll Never Walk Alonel	3545

TV themes

The Fall Guy	10593
Trigger Happy TV	10595
Phoenix Nights	10754
Formula 1	10751
Simpsons	9130
The Muppets	0099
Hawaii 50	4855
Axel F	0153
A Team	4847
Only Fools & Horses	6152
Benny Hill 2	0166
Knightrider	0204
Airwolf	4680
Banana Splits	5316
Match Of The Day	0221
Pink Panther	4691
Eastenders	0043
BBC Cricket	4850
Rainbow	4861
Starsky & Hutch	4863
Thunderbirds	0155
Mission Impossible	0222
Monty Python	0085
Sex & The City	9118
Dangermouse	5334
Star Trek Next Generation	0148
Jamie & The Magic Torch	5363
Casualty	6201
Dr Who	4688

film themes

Back To The Future	6146
Battle Of Britain	6283
Beverly Hills Cop - Axel F	0013
Braveheart Theme	6076
Bugs Life	4685
Close Encounters	5558
Moulin Rouge	5787
Dambusters March	5061
Enter The Dragon	6172
ET-Extra Terrestrial	4821
Evergreen - Barb. Streisand	10729
Everything I Do - Robin Hood	5298
Eye Of The Tiger - Rocky	4852
Forest Gump	4822
Get Carter	5425
Good The Bad And The Ugly	4854
Halloween	0065
Snow White	6072
Indiana Jones	0199
Italian Job	4856
James Bond	0187
Jurassic Park	4825
Mission Impossible	0222
Police Academy	5778
Raindrops -Butch Casidy	8452
Superman	0152
The Magnificent Seven	4826
The Wizzard Of Oz	5366
Top Gun	4864
Officer And A Gentleman	5412
Walace And Gromit	4865
War Of The Worlds	5259
Where Eagles Dare	5422
Wizzard Of Oz	4777

rap tones

Bad Intentions - Dr Dre	6550
Because I Got High - Afroman	5603
Bouncing Back - Mystikal	6642
Break Your Neck - Busta Rhymes	7209
Crazy Rap - Afroman	6772
Diddy - P Diddy	6646
Haters - So Solid Crew	6520
I'm Leavin' - Outsidaz	6556
Lovely - Bubba Sparxxx	6756
Missing You - Puff Daddy	1584
Ms Jackson - Outkast	3706
Rappers Delight - The Sugar Hill Gang	7212
Real Slim Shady - Eminem	1515
Stan - Eminem	1513
The next Episode - Dr. Dre	3676
The Way I Am - Eminem	1579
Ugly - Bubba Sparxx	6168
Woo Haa - Busta Rhymes	8195
You Gets No Love - Faith Evans	6637

indie

Dont Look Back In Anger - Oasis	4122
Wonderwall - Oasis	4121
Parklife - Blur	1520
Get A Job - The Offspring	0405
Alwas Rain On Me - Travis	0404
Losing My Religion - REM	0217
Bitter Sweet Symphony- Verve	0164
Fly For A White Guy - Offspring	0108

club tracks

Kelly Llorenna - Tell It To My Heart	9513
Flip & Fill - Shooting Star	9505
Ian Van Dahl - Reason	8979
Paffendorf - Be Cool	8878
Starchaser - Love Will Set You Free	9285
Basement Jaxx - Get Me Off	9303
Kluster - I Feel Love	9277
Distant Soundz - Runaway	9394

R & B

Dilemma – Nelly	1780
Gangsta Lovin – Eve	10661
Hey Baby – DJ Otzi	5767
Break Your Neck – Busta Rhymes	7209
I Need A Girl – P Diddy	9746
Missing You – Puff Daddy	1584
Livin It Up – Ja Rule	6270
Crossroads – Blazin Squad	10397
Foolish – Ashanti	9302
Hot In Herre – Nelly	8972
Always On Time – Ja Rule	6548
Bootylicious – Destiny's Child	5323
Addictive – Truth Hurts	9730
The World's Greatest – R Kelly	6633
Get This Party Started – Pink	6479
Too Close – Blue	5502
U Turn – Usher	7812

boy bands

One Love - Blue	10943
Uptown Girl - Westlife	3719
No More -A1	3709
The Call - Backstreet Boys	3700
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OFFICIAL TIPS

We've played every game to death and searched the globe to hunt down the latest and greatest tips and codes for your gaming pleasure. Read on, cheats...

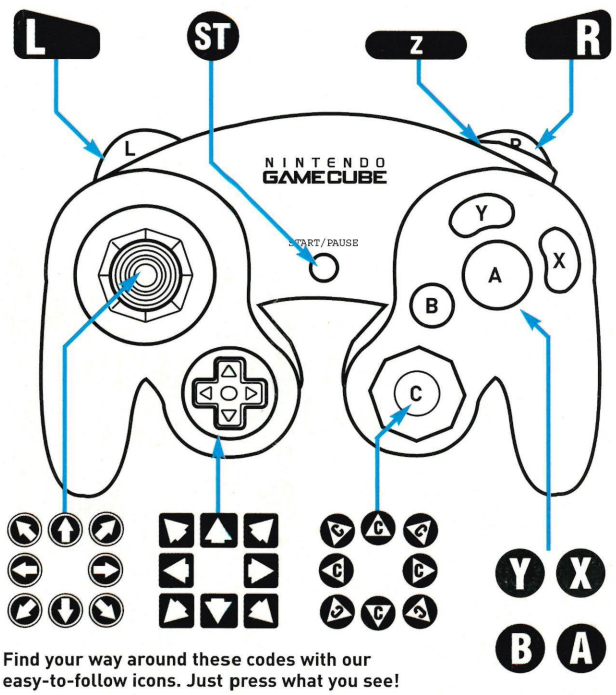
Zelda: The Wind Waker First-island fun p92

Splinter Cell Be more stealthy p93

Ikaruga Gorgeous galleries p94

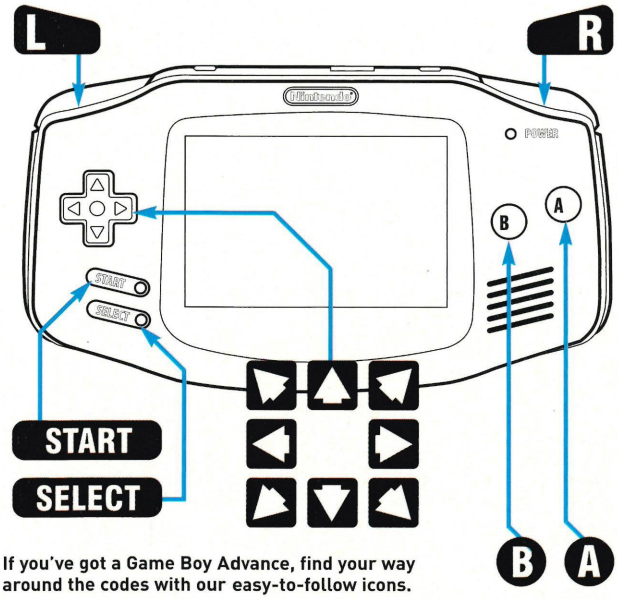
Sonic Advance 2 Crazy characters p94

GAMECUBE CONTROLLER



Find your way around these codes with our easy-to-follow icons. Just press what you see!

GBA CONTROLLER



If you've got a Game Boy Advance, find your way around the codes with our easy-to-follow icons.

ZELDA: THE WIND WAKER

MAD PIGS AND DIFFERENT MUSIC

We know you've been buying it like gamers possessed, so here are a few fun things you can do at the start of the game.

01

❑ Remember the mad chickens in *A Link To The Past* that attacked Link when you kept slashing your sword at them? Do the same with a pig on Outset Island.

02

❑ Do you want completely different background music during your epic adventure? If so, just enter Zelda as your name at the very start of the game.

ZELDA: A LINK TO THE PAST

HYRULIAN TRANSFORMATIONS AND EASIER KILLS

The return of Link's Super NES adventure has had us drooling for weeks now.

01

❑ If your Heart Meter is bleeping at you like mad, chuck some Magic Potion onto a Bee and it will turn into a Fairy. And remember you can store them in a Bottle for later.

02

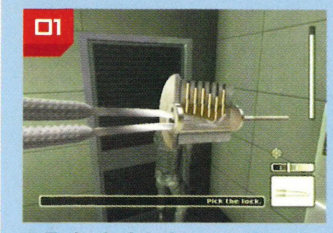
❑ Catch a Bee and store it in a Bottle. When released, the little terror will attack your enemies, so save them for the tougher areas inside the game's dungeons.

SPLINTER CELL

■ QUICK BODY DROP, FASTER LOCKPICK AND MORE

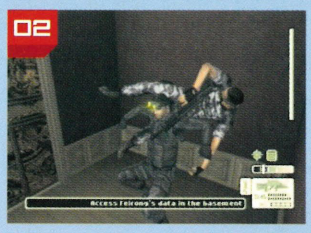
There's hours of sneaking and hiding in the shadows in this awesome game. Use these tips and you won't go far wrong.

01



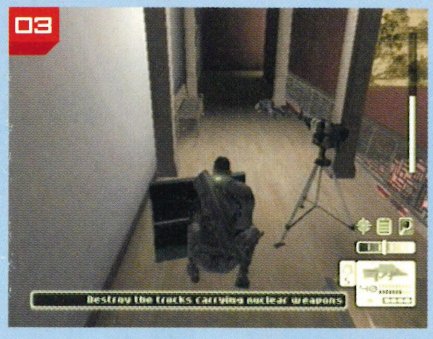
❑ To lockpick doors quicker, don't rotate the manual lockpick. Just move the 3D Stick between the four diagonal directions and it will eventually unlock.

02



❑ To move one of your victims about a lot quicker, equip a weapon. Now you will drop the body a lot quicker, giving you more time to get on with the main mission.

03



❑ If one of the turrets is giving you serious problems throw a flare near it. The turret will then be distracted for a short time, giving you precious seconds to sneak up from behind and take it out.

METROID PRIME

■ SEE SAMUS' FACE, HEAT WAVES AND A TIRED SAMUS

Samus finished second in our Top 100 Games list, but she's still kicking butt all across Tallon IV. For a bit of a breather though, why not have some fun with these beauties.

01

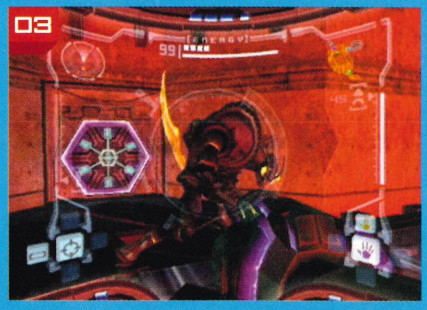
❑ *Prime* is a visual treat and the game's heat wave effects are tasty. Just smash away at a Beam weapon for over a minute and you'll see an awesome heat wave.

02

❑ To make this work better enter one of the game's snow-covered levels and charge up Samus' Arm Cannon. Fire into the ground and you'll see her face.

❑ When things are quiet don't do anything for a while and Samus will start to play with her Arm Cannon. Continue doing nothing and she'll start to take a quick kip. Oi, bird! Wake up!

03

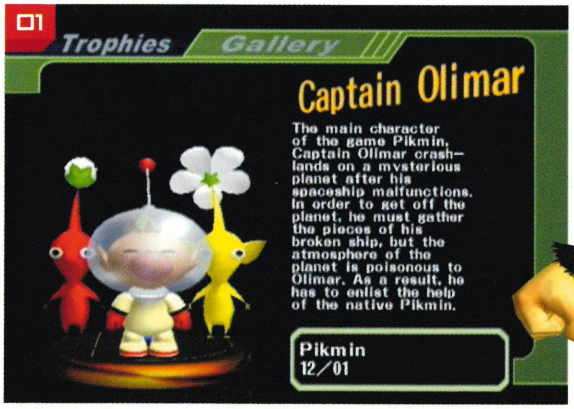


SUPER SMASH BROS. MELEE

■ MOVE YOUR TROPHIES, FIGHT AS SHEIK AND LOADS MORE...

We've uncovered yet more tips and tricks for your favourite Nintendo all-stars game. For more *Melee* madness, just read on.

01

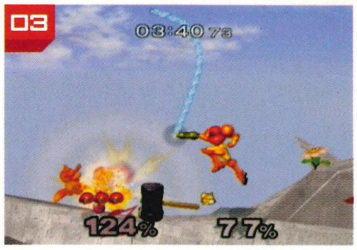


❑ On the Trophy Collection screen you can have some right fun rearranging your collection: hold L and they'll move into rows; hold R and they'll form into a circle; hold Y for a triangle pattern.

02

❑ To scrap as Sheik hold down A when you place your counter on Zelda at the Character Select screen. When the fight starts you'll hear a *Zelda* effect and start fighting as Sheik.

03



❑ For an extra-long Samus Grappling Beam press Z, R and A, then rotate the D-Pad through 360°. You'll now have a longer Beam, but will have to press A to snare any enemies.

FAST TIPS

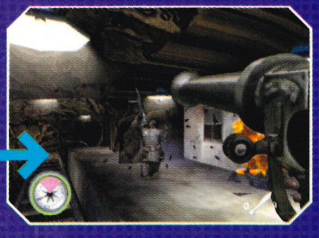
Check out AiAi's cheeky monkey noggin', get unlimited use of the Force and unlock absolutely everything in *Medal of Honor Frontline*.

SUPER MONKEY BALL 2

Burst through the Goal tape on the level called Reversible Gear, and wait for the replay. You should now be able to see AiAi's head on the right.

MEDAL OF HONOR FRONTLINE

To open up absolutely everything in the game, simply enter the code BALLOWAX on the Enigma machine.



STAR WARS JEDI KNIGHT II: JEDI OUTCAST

For infinite Force to use against the Stormtroopers and the Dark Jedi, just enter SCOOTER on the Cheat menu.

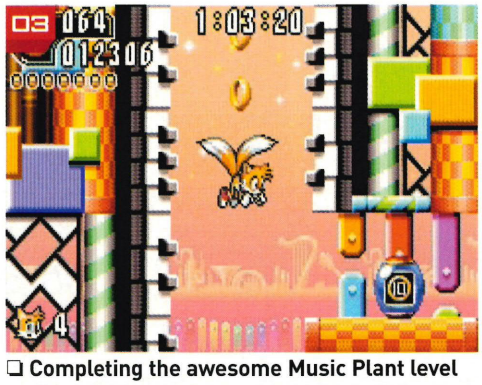
SONIC ADVANCE 2

■ UNLOCK HIDDEN CHARACTERS AND EXTRA BONUSES

The Game Boy Advance's speed demon wasn't going to let another month go by without steaming in with some tasty tips. Take it away Sonic, m'lad!

❑ To unlock Cream, complete the Leaf Forest level with Sonic.

❑ By finishing the Sky Plant world with Sonic, platform favourite Knuckles will be yours.



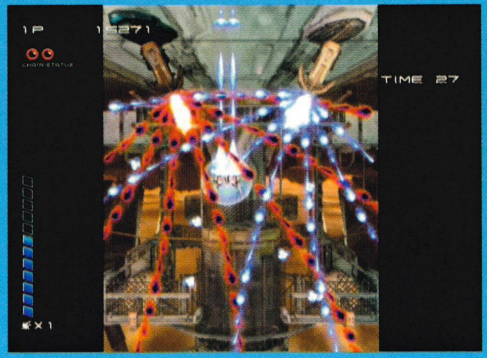
❑ Completing the awesome Music Plant level as Sonic will unlock his old sidekick, Tails.

IKARUGA

■ UNLOCK THE GAME'S GALLERIES

The relentless firepower of this old-skool shooter is now legendary within the *NOM* office and if you haven't got a copy yet what's keeping you? If you have, check these out...

❑ To open Gallery One, beat Trial mode without using a continue. Alternatively just play the game for over five hours.



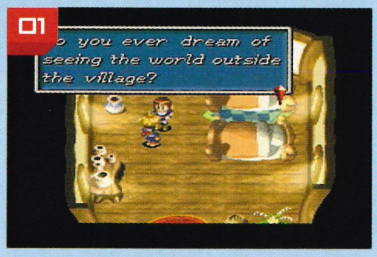
❑ To open Gallery Two just beat the game on any difficulty. Alternatively you can play the game for over ten hours to access it.

GOLDEN SUN

REVISIT LAST TOWN AND NAME YOUR CHARACTERS

We thought you wouldn't mind a look back at some tips to help you get the most out of this Nintendo cracker.

01



❑ As soon as you switch on your GBA, continue your game and press L, R, START and SELECT. Now you begin at the last town you visited.

02

❑ Enter ▲, ▼, ▲, ▼, ◀, ▶, ◀, ▶, ▲, ▶, ▼, ◀, ▲ and SELECT before naming your character. Now you can name everyone in your party. No swearing please...

SUPER MONKEY BALL 2

■ GET POINTS QUICKLY

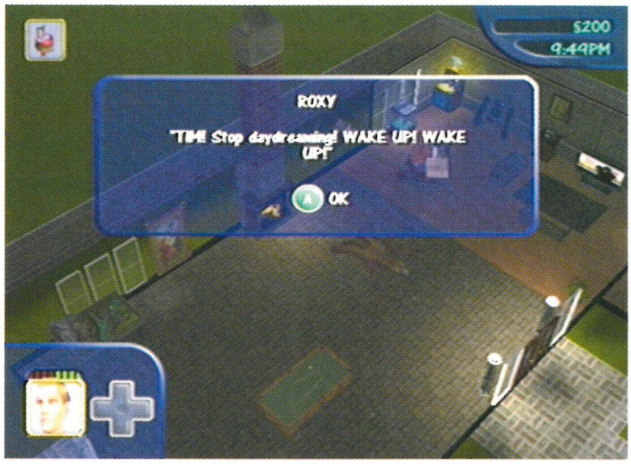
It's one of the best multiplayer games currently doing the rounds, but if you're having difficulty racking up those points here's a much quicker way of doing it.

❑ Challenge mode is the key to getting tons of points. Keep playing the Beginner level without using any continues for more stages and even more points.

THE SIMS

UNLOCK TWO-PLAYER, OBJECTS AND SKINS

With more *Sims* action heading your way soon (see Planet Nintendo) you'd better get the heads-up on the first one.



❑ Press L and R at the Main Menu to unlock the Cheat Menu. Enter MIDAS, begin Get A Life mode, get in the hot tub with the girl and press START. Choose Quit, then Just Quit to unlock all skins, objects and two-player games.

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Q&A UK

No problem too big, no query too small. Send all your gaming questions to the *NOM* boffins at Q&A UK and not only will you have the chance of getting in the mag, you could be receiving some Gamester goodies in return.

STAR FOX

Q On *Star Fox Adventures* I'm really stuck on the Cloud Runner flying mission at Dragon Rock. I can't get past it without being shot down. Can you help?
Andrew Gardyne, Banchory

Did you know? You can see some cool new shots of Fox McCloud's next adventure, *Star Fox 2*, by turning back to Planet Nintendo.

A You're not the only person stuck on this section, Andrew, it's pretty tough. Sadly there's no easy solution. But there are three things you can do to make it a little bit easier. Firstly, hammer the A button like a crazy fool. Second, try and take out the advancing enemies as quickly as possible and, finally, as soon as the enemies are gone aim for the turrets. You should be able to do it in just two passes.

One more thing...

Without giving away the ending, we're just going to give you a quick tip: don't forget to use the roll move. Say no more, squire, nudge nudge, wink, wink.

Fox realised he must have got off at the wrong stop

TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 3

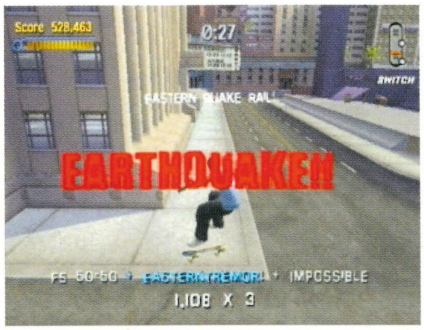
Q I'm playing *Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 3* and I'm stuck on one of the objectives in LA. How on Earth do I block the car chase?
Sukharj Singh, Ealing

Did you know? You can unlock some pretty weird characters in *Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 3*, like The X-Men's Wolverine, Darth Maul from *Star Wars Episode I*, Kelly Slater and Ollie the Magic Bum.

A There's a bit of preparation to do for this challenge. First of all you've got to grind the four Earthquake rails to start the tremor, this will collapse the freeway. Next head over to the Car Wash and use the ramps next to a fire engine to get up onto the destroyed road. Finally you must grind along the wall and over the car that's dangling from the bridge. Job done, skate dude.

Don't forget...

If you're a patient gamer – and there must be some of you out there – once you've unlocked Private Carrera, leave her on the Character Selection screen and listen to the skate shop dude go totally crazy.



Like all great skate dudes, Tony Hawk can make the earth move with no trouble at all

METROID PRIME

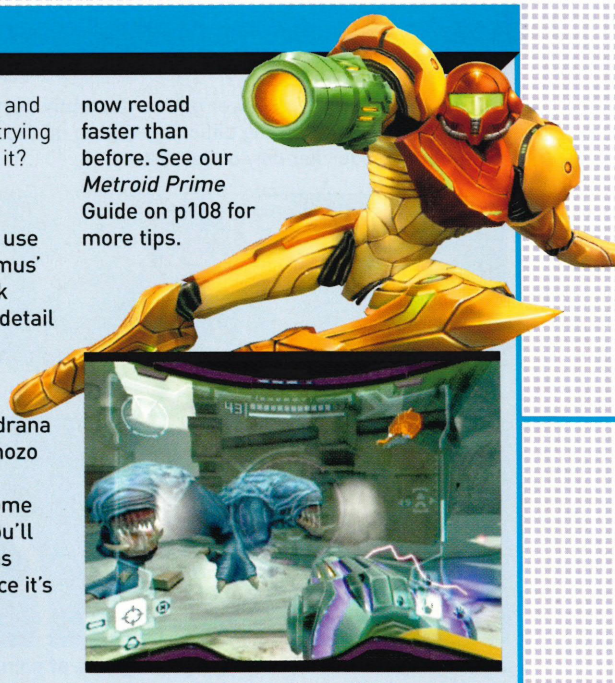
Q I've been playing *Metroid Prime* and I'm doing alright, but I'm stuck trying to find the Wave Beam. How do I get it?
Mark Draper, via e-mail

Did you know? It's not a whole lot of use from a gaming point of view, but Samus' Flamethrower upgrade doesn't work underwater. Now that's attention to detail for you, gamers.

A To get to the Wave Beam you'll need to head through the Phendrana Shorelines, the Temple Entryway, Chozo Ice Temple and through the Chapel Tunnel Morph Ball Maze until you come to the Chapel of the Elders. There you'll come up against four baby Sheegoths before facing the Sheegoth boss. Once it's dead, the Wave Beam is yours.

And another thing...

To fire Missiles quicker, press A after you've fired one and then hit Y. You'll now reload faster than before. See our *Metroid Prime* Guide on p108 for more tips.



Imitation is the sincerest form of flattery, but these blue guys look a lot like the Alien to us

A LINK TO THE PAST

Q I got my GBA SP and the first game I bought for it was *A Link to the Past*. I've got the Master Sword and the Three Pendants, but now I'm stuck trying to defeat Agahnim.
Sam Taylor, Kent

Did you know? If you're cruel to a chicken then it'll run and get its mates. Just attack a chicken a few times and wait for the cavalry to arrive.

A When Agahnim appears, stand to his side to avoid a quick attack. Agahnim has three random attacks: a white ball of energy; a three-pronged purple ball attack; and a lightning bolt that shoots from his hands. When you see the white ball, hit it back at him. Avoid the purple attack by standing diagonally to it, don't hit it. When you see the lightning bolt, hide in a corner of the room. Hit the white ball of energy back at him enough and you'll beat him.

One more thing...

When you get the Pegasus Boots, use them to run into trees that are standing on their own to get either Rupees or angry Bees.

BROKEN SWORD: SHADOW OF THE TEMPLARS

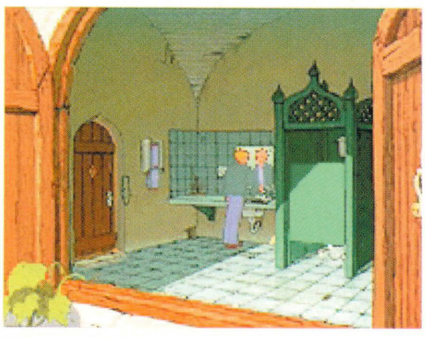
Q I have the Chalice, which I have given to the Priest to clean up and I know that I have to combine the Lens with the Scroll. The Scroll is on the statue, but where is the Lens and how do I go about combining them?
Amanda, Wolverhampton

Did you know? You'll complete the game with a few items that you never used, or needed to. This is a bit of a hangover from the original PC version before it was converted.

A The Lens is to be found in Syria. When you get there you'll need to get a taxi out to the Bull's Head. Get a branch from the tree and lower yourself into the cave. You'll then get accosted by an assassin. Answer his questions truthfully and say you want to die like a man. When he says he wants to shake your hand, equip the Hand Buzzer. Now you should get the Lens.

Also...

If you press L when you enter a room you'll be able to cycle through all of the interactive items in the room.



This must be the cleanest bathroom in the whole of Syria, but we bet there's still no loo roll

WRITE IN, WIN PRIZES!

If you're stuck and need a helping hand, why not scribble your problem down and send it off to us at *NOM*. If your letter gets in the mag, we'll send you one of these fab goodies from the nice people at Gamester. You'll get a cool ProRacer steering wheel for a GameCube query, or a Flo-Light for a GBA stumper.

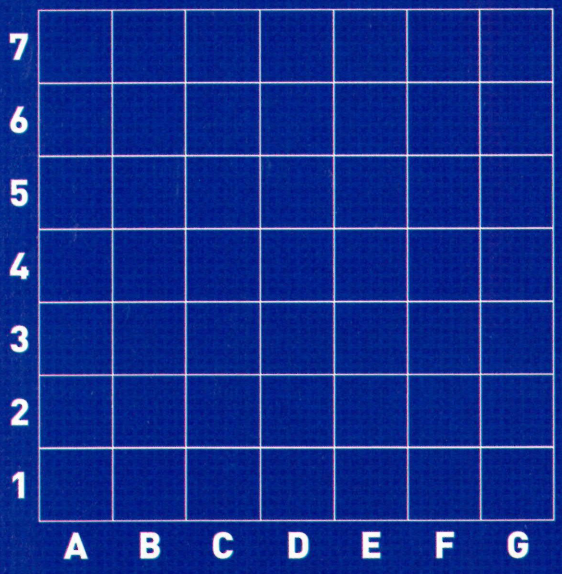
GAMESTER

PART ONE

ZELDA WALKTHROUGH

GOT TROUBLE WAKING THE WIND? HERE'S A HELPING HAND

Get up, Link, it's a walkthrough! Oh, never mind... Welcome to the first part of our superb *Wind Waker* guide. You'll find all the help you need to complete your adventure between now and next month, but don't panic, there's plenty left to find out for yourself.



ZELDA FOR BEGINNERS

- Okay, grid references in this guide are based on the grid shown to the left. So, for reference D4, you'd go four in and four up, got it?
- Next, it's important that you get the Rupee Bag upgrade from the Fairy at C7 as soon as you can. That way, you'll be able to collect much more treasure.
- Talk to as many people as possible – they'll tell you secrets and ask for your help.
- Finally, buy as much Bait as you can from Beedle and find those fish, because they'll give you valuable information.

OUTSET ISLAND

■ Once you've stopped gawking at the visuals, climb down the ladder and go over the bridge. Go to the first house on the right and get your outfit from Grandma.

■ Go back to Aryll, get the Telescope and look through it to the Post Box outside Grandma's house. Then look into the sky to find the huge bird. Watch the movie.

■ Head back down the ladder, over the bridge and go in the first house on the left, ground floor. Receive some training from Orca and get the Hero Sword.

OUTSET ISLAND, CONTINUED...

■ Cross the bridge. Follow the path into the grotto. Kill the Moblin to get nearer to Tetra.

■ Climb up the tree and fight two more enemies. Return to Grandma for the Shield.

■ Go back to the pirates on the beach. Agree to go with them. Head below deck to find Niko.

■ Complete Niko's challenge to get the Spoils Bag. Now go up to the crow's nest.

FORSAKEN FORTRESS

■ Climb up the steps and use one of the many Barrels to hide under, keeping out of the light. Sneak past the spotlights and through the large main doors. Turn left.

■ Use a Barrel to sneak past two of the sentries. Head through the door. Follow the room around and go through the next door. Sneak past another pig.

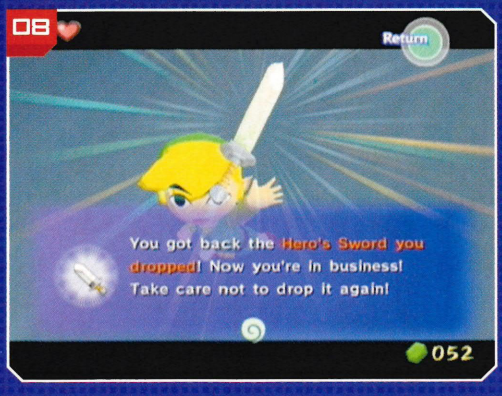
■ Run to the nearest ladder to avoid the laser. Climb all the ladders and then listen to Tetra. Go through the arch on the right and climb.

■ Smash the pot and grab a stick. Beat the Moblin who's controlling the searchlights. Climb back down the ladder and turn right.

■ Swing across the room to get the trusty Dungeon Map, then swing back and go through the door. Continue up towards the tower.

■ Get under a Barrel and carefully sneak past the snuffling pig guard. Now climb the set of steps and go through the double doors in front of you.

■ First sneak past another guard and then turn left. Next you'll have to Sidle along the two ledges and head up the steps in front of you.



■ Finally cold steel is back in your grasp! Grab your sword from the floor and do away with the nasty Moblin guarding the area. Now head through the large double doors.

■ She's safe! Poor Aryll is waiting for you in a cage, but stop right there, fancy pants – you can't rescue her just yet. Oh no, what's that big... nah, watch the movie for yourself.

WINDFALL ISLAND

■ Walk up the beach, past an old man and a tall tree and head through the archway on the left by the Post Box.

■ Buy the Sail that you need from the would-be shopkeeper for 80 Rupees. Now that's a bargain!

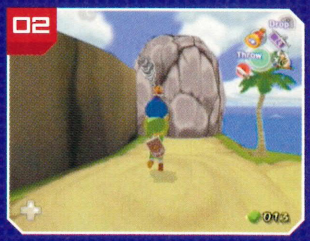
■ The bizarre-looking Tingle is hiding on this island, too. Find Tott, the Elvis-like dancing kid and head on through the door that's to his rear.

■ Smash all of the pots outside Tingle's cell to find a Switch and free the poor blighter. Get the Tingle Tuner and Tingle's Sea Chart.

■ Now it's off to the ocean waves! Go back to the place where you left the boat and equip the Sail. Check the Map and head for the square marked in blue.

DRAGON ROOST ISLAND

■ Go through the tunnel and swim out to the island. Use the Wind Waker at the tablet.



■ Use Bombs to remove the rocks and Sidle along the ledge to the Mail Centre.

■ Head up the ramp and through the first door on the left. Find Medli and get the Letter. Go to the ground floor and through the door without a sentry to find Komali. Give him the Letter.

■ Go back and outside the guarded door. Pick up Medli and wait for the wind to blow behind you before throwing.

■ Fill the Bottle in the pool and climb up the collapsed bridge. Pour the water on the dried-up Bomb Plants.

■ Destroy the huge rock to flood the canyon, then swim across the gap to where you threw Medli. Throw Bombs onto the green trays held by the statues, creating a bridge into the cavern.

DRAGON ROOST CAVERN

■ Pull the left-hand block towards you to fill the empty space. Use the Moblin's lit stick to light the torches. Get the Key.

■ Smash through with your Sword and go left. Jump the gap, pull the block and climb up, using the Bombs to reveal a door.

■ Throw an Urn into the lava and jump across. Climb and go through the door. Use the Moblin's Sword to smash the panels.

■ Jump onto the ledge and smash the wood to get a Key. Go through the left-hand door. Throw rocks to detonate the Bombs.

■ Set fire to the boards and jump onto the switch. Once outside, go right and climb up the ladder. Sneak along the ledge.

■ After the ledge, use Bombs to reveal a door. Arrange the blocks so you can climb. Go through and pull another block.

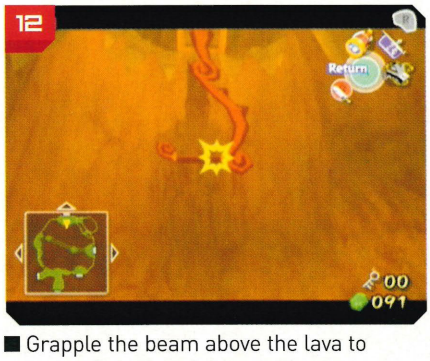
■ Throw a lit stick at the wood and get the Key. Outside, rouse the bird and get the Key from its nest. Open the door behind you.

■ Set fire to the door, then the torches. Cross the bridge and watch out for hiding Moblins. Light torches to get the Chart.

■ Upstairs, throw an Urn into the lava, creating a lift. Outside, run up the collapsing steps. Now you can free Medli.

■ Get the Grappling Hook and go down the cliff until you get to the door. Cut the ropes on the bridge. Head through the door.

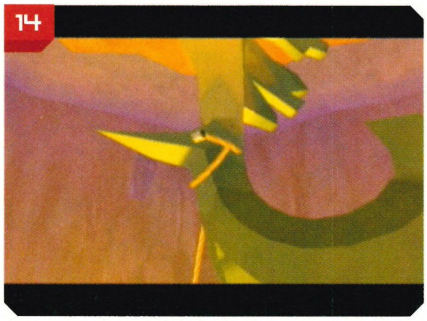
■ Climb into the cage and use a Spinning Attack to cut all three cords. Jump off at the bottom and work your way up.



■ Grapple the beam above the lava to unlock the door and then work your way over the platforms.

DRAGON ROOST CAVERN, CONTINUED...

■ In the room at the end, hit the weird fire centipede so that it rolls into a ball and place it on the Switch to get the Big Key. Retrace your steps back outside, up three of the grappling poles. Go through the door on your right. Grapple across the lava.



■ Now you're in for a treat. When the massive boss rises up from the lava, quickly look up and grapple Valoo's tail. Wait too long and the boss will slap you around with his claws. Grapple onto Valoo's tail three times.

■ When the boss' hard shell is broken target its eye. Hit it once or twice and then run – boss defeated, nice work, fella. Teleport back outside. Get Din's Pearl from Komali, change the wind direction to south and then get back in your boat.

FOREST HAVEN

■ Work your way up the side of the island. You'll need to grapple twice and use your Shield to deflect enemy fire.

■ The Deku Tree is covered in nasty little ChuChus, but just roll into him and the little sods will all fall off. Now they're within range you can kill them all.

■ This bit requires a certain amount of accuracy. Use the Bada Buds to launch you into the air. You'll need to grapple into one of them halfway up. Now get the Deku Leaf.

■ Float across to the helpful little Korok and fill up your Leaf's magical energy. This is very important because you can't float without any magic and that's bad. Go outside.

■ Now you must use a combination of the Wind Waker's Wind's Requiem, the magical Deku Leaf and the cyclone to float across to the entrance of the Forbidden Woods. Eeek!

FORBIDDEN WOODS

■ Turn right to the Chest. Get the Map and Deku Nut. Throw the Nut at the blocked door. Use the Leaf and Buds to get to the top platform. Use a Bomb to unlock the door.

■ Waft the Leaf at the rotors to get the platform to come to you, then waft again to get across. Go to the right, use the Buds to get to the top, then waft the Leaf again.

■ Blast the rotor to the right, then use the rotor to the left to get across and get the Nut. Put the Nut down and fan the far rotor to return. Use the Nut to unlock the door.

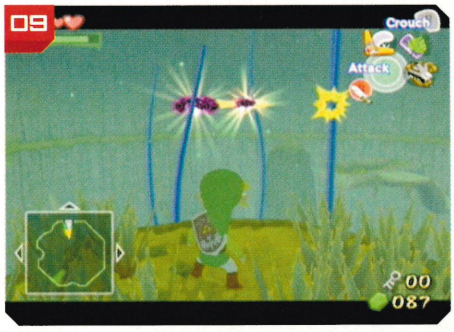
■ Use the Leaf to push the Nut away from the spiky vines. Grapple and jump your way to the next Nut. Throw it into the centre and then to the right. Unlock the door.

■ Look out for the vines and head left. Throw a Bomb over the vines towards the far wooden slats. Work your way back to the right to get the Small Key.

■ Go back to the big room on the Third Floor and use the Key. Get across on the platform, then use the Bada Buds to get on top of the trees. Go through the unlocked door.

■ Use your Deku Leaf to waft this enemy and then attack him with your sword as he falls. Once his wings come off just batter his fat arse until he's dead.

■ Get the Boomerang. Use it on the two lanterns above the locked door to open the gate. Go to the opposite door and use the Boomerang on the two vines.

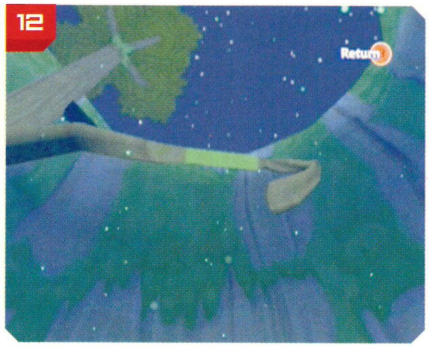


■ Cut enough vines down with your Boomerang to allow you to Deku Leaf across the gap. Cut the five blue vines and work your way down to the new hole.

■ Go right and through the door. Jump onto the brown flower and use the Boomerang to cut the four cords. Use the Leaf to waft downstream. Go through the door.

FORBIDDEN WOODS, CONTINUED...

■ Climb to the top of the mound and use the Boomerang to light all five lanterns simultaneously. Get the Big Key.

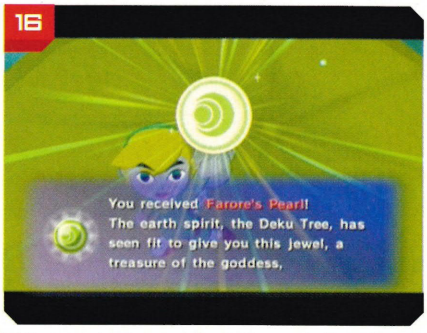


■ Defeat the two enemies, then climb back to the top of the mound and Grapple Hook your way to a door high above.

■ At the blue flower, waft the rotor, then Bada Bud up to the second floor. Kill the vines and the two enemies.

■ Run towards Makor and use the Boomerang to cut down the vine.

■ Once it drops, attack the central flower. It may swallow you, but there's health near.



■ Return Makor and get Farore's Pearl. Head back to the boat and go northwest.

HUNT FOR JABUN

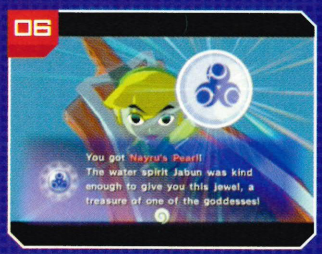
■ Sail to Greatfish Island (B4). Jabun has left for Outset Island. First go to Windfall, up the beach and turn right.

■ Sidle along this ledge and climb the vines to the opening. Eavesdrop on the Pirates and note the password.

■ Head back and jump on their ship. Use the password and complete Niko's new test to get 30 Bombs. Go back to your boat.

■ Go to Outset Island and see Grandma. She's not very well. Now go back to the boat.

■ Sail around to a whirlpool and use the Cannon to blast through the rock face.

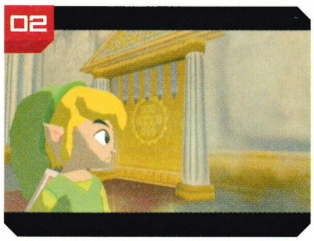


■ Sail in and speak to Jabun. Get Nayru's Pearl. Take all the pearls to the locations marked.

■ Watch in awe as something amazing happens. This is why Nintendo rocks the world.

TOWER OF THE GODS

■ Put statue on panel. Jump into pit. Put box on glowing spot. Cross bridge and get Statue.



■ Take Statue out and put in left groove. Sail through gate and put Statues on glowing pads.

■ Push the bigger boxes into a line. Light the two far torches. Get the Small Key. Sail to the opposite side of the tower and use the Cannon to take out the wall panels. Climb through.

■ Go to the lower door, kill the Yellow ChuChus. Grab the Statue, take it to the upper deck and place it in the groove to change the flow of the water.

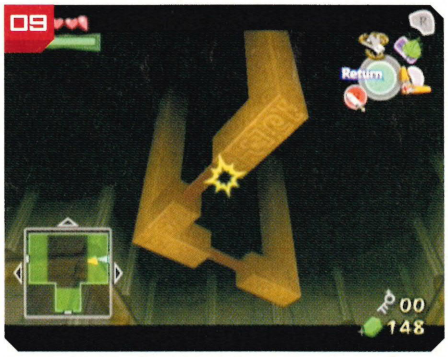
■ Go southeast into the cage and through the door. Blow up the panels and get the Dungeon Map. Now sail to the door in the middle, where the water used to flow from. Go through.

■ Watch out for the laser. Carry the Statues to the lit pads. Stand on the third to start the elevators. Ride to the upper floor. Enter door and ride across on platform.

■ Go through the door into a large room, turn right and head through the glowing door. Go through the next door. Walk over the glowing platform and read the tablet. Take control of the Statue.

■ Guide it back over the ledge, pick it up and go back to the central room. Go to the tablet on the pedestal and learn the new melody. Go through the west door.

■ Grapple to the far side, through the door and grapple again. Call the Statue and stand on the Switch. Use Command Melody and walk the Statue over the bridge. Pick it up and place it on the pad.



■ Grapple to the door and defeat the Knight. Get the Bow. Now, shoot the eye and get the Statue. Take it back to the central room. Enter final door.

■ Use the platforms to get to the Eye Switch. Shoot it and ride up to get Key.

■ Put Statues on platform. Go through and climb onto statue's head. Float across barrier.

TOWER OF THE GODS, CONTINUED...

■ Call Idol. Use Command melody. Stand on Switch. Carry Idol through. Place Statues on platform. Carry Idol to main room. Step into the light.

■ Destroy laser turrets with Bombs and place Statues on the pads. Walk over third pad. Get Key. Stun two statues with Arrows and hit their backs.

■ Run up the steps, taking out the blue lasers with Arrows as you go. Grab some Hearts and save your game here.

■ When the Boss appears, fire Arrows at the eyes on his hands until they both go limp. You're nearly there, kiddo...

■ Now aim for the head's eyes. Once they're out, throw a Bomb into its mouth. Use your forward roll to dodge the fiery breath.

■ Outside, climb the bell tower and grapple the ringer. Now sit back and watch the cut-scene as you sail below the sea.

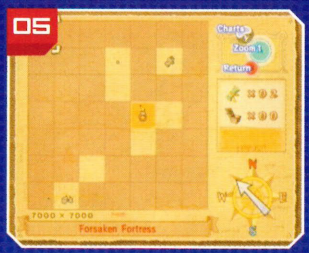
UNDERWATER CASTLE

■ First go to the centre of the room and pull the three massive blocks onto the light-grey triangles in the floor. This should form the good old Triforce symbol. Cool.

■ Now take a deep breath, because this is the bit you've been waiting for, *Zelda* fans... walk beneath the statue and you'll collect the fabulous Master Sword.

■ Now get your little green ass back upstairs, because you'll need to defeat every single bad-boy enemy in the main hall to unlock the door. Have it!

■ Now get back to the boat and sail into the light shining down from above. You'll be teleported right back to the entrance to the Tower of the Gods.



■ Set the wind to northwest and sail back to A7, the Forsaken Fortress.

■ Once you get to the Fortress, circle it until you find a wooden door. Blast it open.

FORSAKEN FORTRESS 2

■ Go up towards the double doors. Phantom Ganon appears. Deflect his shots.

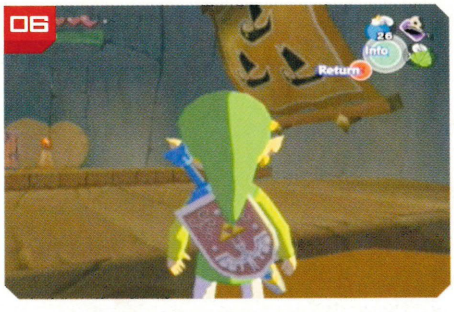
■ When he falls, hit him with your Sword until he can't stand up anymore. Get the Hammer.

■ Use that nice new Hammer you just won to smash your way through the barricade. Now go up the path, then left through the arch and into the left-hand door.

■ Now float across the wide-open gap using your Deku Leaf. Next you'll need to smash the barricades to smithereens in order to get past.

■ When you get outside you'll need to turn left and go up the path, and then up the ladder. Defeat the Moblin that's manning the searchlight, just like you did on your first visit.

■ Now go back down the ladder, through the arch and turn left. Next you'll need to grit your teeth and work your way up the tower just like you did before.



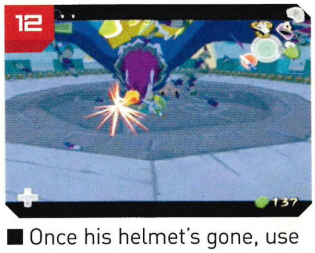
■ When you finally reach the top, smash the big Switch with the Hammer to unlock the double doors. Now get your ass inside for a scrap.

■ When the big bird appears, leg it up the path. Avoid the enemies and you should be fine. If you fall off the edge you'll need to Grapple your way back up.

■ Smack the big bird on the head with the Hammer.

■ Wait for him to try and peck you, then hit him again.

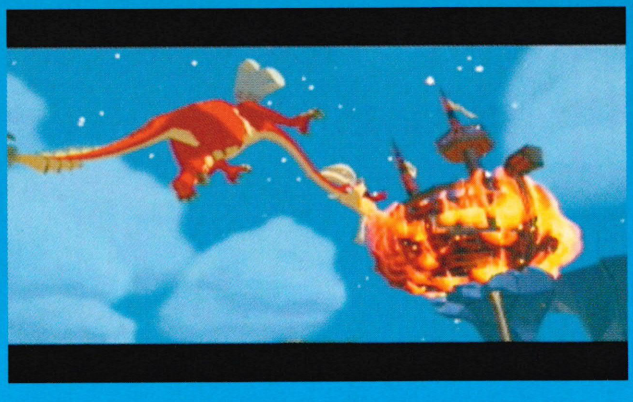
■ Roll out of the way of his talons when he swoops in.



■ Once his helmet's gone, use your Sword to cut his head off.

NEXT MONTH

Now watch the enormous, amazing, super plot-spoiling movie to find out exactly what's going on. See you next ish...



METROID PRIME HARDEST BITS BUSTED

TAKE ON THE MIGHT OF TALLON IV AND GET OUT ALIVE WITH OUR SUPER GUIDE

Samus has been selling like hot cakes since she exploded back onto the Nintendo scene at the end of March. And should you still be having trouble with her adventure, we've taken care of it with a complete guide to the hardest parts of the game. Lock and load gang, we're going in...

BEAT THE HIVE MECHA

■ When the Hive Mecha emerges, the Ram War Wasps will start attacking you in waves. Spin around and quickly take out the first wave of War Wasps. Before the next wave arrives, scan the Hive Mecha just below the water line. Now target each of the red lights in turn to destroy the beast.

GET THE CHARGE BEAM

01

■ After saving, head out through the door on the far side of the Gathering Hall. Go through Watery Hall Access, scanning all the runes you see. Go through the blast shield door to reach the Watery Hall.

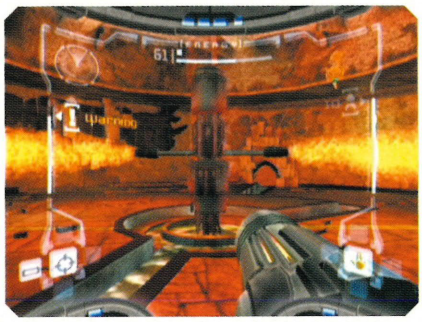
02

■ Shoot the Blastcaps on the platforms to clear a path so that you can jump across. Scan the first of four runes on the platform. The remaining three runes are all clearly visible as you make your way across the platforms.

03

■ Once all the runes are activated, scan the single rune in the middle of the door to access the chamber containing the Charge Beam. Once you have the Charge Beam, scan more of the Chozo Lore script nearby.

BEAT THE INCINERATOR DRONE



■ Notice the Stone Toad lurking in an alcove to the right. You can't harm it for now so Morph Ball through the series of tunnels ahead. Once inside the Burn Dome just keep firing at the Incinerator Drone's red targets to defeat it.

BEAT THE CLOCK

01

■ Defeat the Drone for the Morph Ball Bomb Upgrade. Blast into the next chamber for a Missile Expansion and head back to the Stone Toad. Drop a Bomb in its mouth.

02

■ After the Toad blows, access the Energy Machine. Scan it and the panel opposite. Insert the Morph Ball into the Slot to drain the toxic fluid and restore power.

03

■ Roll down into the main room and run across to the Morph Ball Slot on the other side. Activate it, then go back around and jump across the platforms that appear.

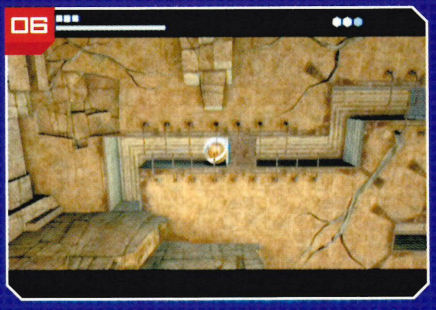
04

■ When you reach the third Slot, activate it in the same way and jump across the final set of platforms to the roof. Jump across to the door to reach West Furnace.

05

■ Roll through tunnels to reach the Furnace and get an Energy Tank. Now head back to the Arboretum. Once there, scan the four red runes. One is below some Venom Weeds on the ground.

06



■ Make your way up to the very top of the tree, jumping across platforms and clearing your way through the sandstone blocks with Morph Ball Bombs. After scanning all the runes the gate will open.

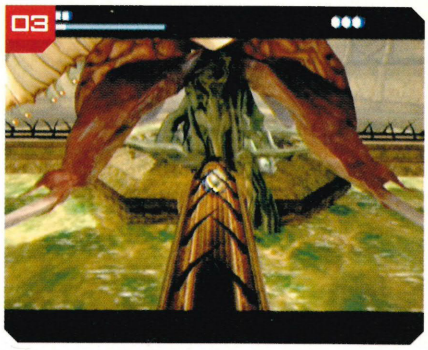
07

■ Bomb the rubble, then roll through. Missile blast the door to gain access to the Sunchamber Lobby, a corridor with Reaper Vines and Venom Weeds. Eventually you'll come to the Sunchamber.

DEFEAT FLAAHGRA AND GET THE VARIA SUIT

■ Scan the main plant and one of its tentacles. You must tilt the mirrors away from Flaahgra, denying it sunlight and forcing it to block the Morph Ball channels.

■ Get a target lock on the main plant body, then circle around the outside, firing continuously. When you reach one of the Mirror Arrays, unleash your Charge Beam.



■ When all the Arrays are dark, Flaahgra will be stunned, withdrawing its tentacles. Roll down the channel and drop a Bomb. Repeat this three times for the Varia Suit.

GET THE BOOST BALL

■ Avoid the Pulse Bombus and go through the door to Ice Ruins West. Watch out for any Baby Sheegoths. Go to the right platform and through the far-right door.

■ Scan the Chozo Lore markings. Climb down into the canyon and fight yet more Baby Sheegoths. Jump up to the right and scan the panel to re-align the platforms.

■ Jump across the platforms to reach the Boost Ball. Using your new skill, Boost up and over the side of the natural half-pipe. Retrace your steps to Phendrana Shoreline.

GET THE ARTEFACT OF STRENGTH

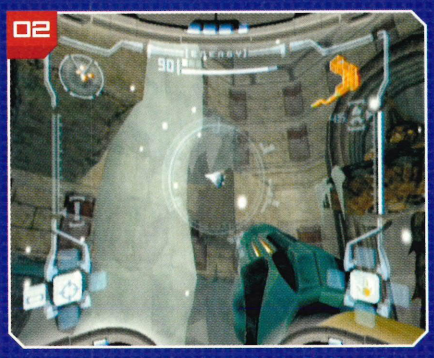
■ At Magmoor Caverns East go directly to the Monitor Station. Jump up to reach the main bridge. Space Jump up to the platform on the left, then Jump again to the higher bridge.

■ Head for the central console, scan it and use the Spinner. Press B several times to extend the bridge and go across, Space Jumping over the gap. Jump up and around to the right.

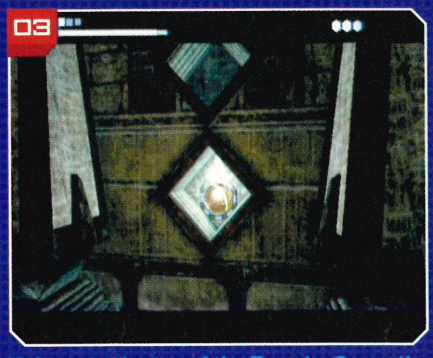
■ Enter the Warrior Shrine. Scan the Bendezium. Jump across and get the Artefact of Strength. Head back and take the transport all the way up to Phendrana Drifts North.

DEFEAT SHEEGOTH AND GET THE WAVE BEAM

■ At the Save Station go left and jump to the hovering platform, then across to the Temple. Enter and run past the Bombu.



■ Charge Beam iced-up door. Roll under Bombu to reach Ice Temple. Scan the Ice Parasites and use Missiles on them.



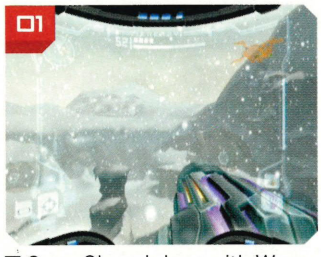
■ Jump to the top of the Temple. Scan all statues. Blast Shamen for a Morph Ball Slot. Jump in and bomb open the gate.

■ In the Chapel Tunnel, bomb through the blocks. Blast the centre of the columns. Go to the Wave Beam inside the Chapel.

■ The deadly Sheegoth is after you. Scan her, then lock-on and circle so that you have her in your sights from the side.

■ Keep firing Missiles at her jaw – don't use Charge. When she flashes red she's hit. Defeat her and get the Wave Beam.

SURVIVE THE RUINED COURTYARD



■ Open Chapel door with Wave Beam. Go back to Save Station. Scan the ice islands. Space Jump to the first one.

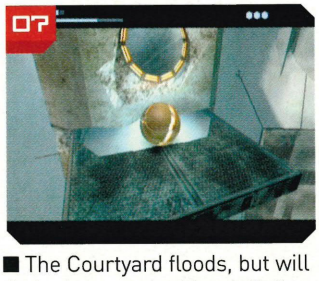
■ Jump to the Ruins Entryway. Head to Ice Ruins West. Jump to the alcove on the right of the entrance. Scan the Chozo Lore.

■ Jump to the top of the building. Look through the hole in the wall and scan the Hanging Rock Structure.

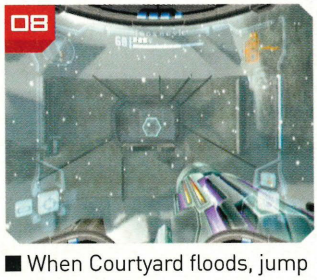
■ Fire a Missile at the Rock Structure. Go down and use the platform to progress. Climb up through more ruins.

■ Jump across towards the Wave Beam door. Go through to the Entryway and keep going until the Ruined Courtyard.

■ Scan hatches. Use Spinner to activate them. Now use the left Spinner to activate a Morph Ball Slot. Jump up and use it.



■ The Courtyard floods, but will drain. Leap to the Morph Ball Tunnel. Go down for an Energy Tank. Reactivate the other Slot.



■ When Courtyard floods, jump on ice and go up to central platform at the top. Jump to blast shield door and enter.

FIND THE SUPER MISSILES

■ At the central platform, go through the Wave Beam door. Take out the Turret and scan Pirate. Move on to Research area.

■ Scan next Pirate. Clear room to unlock door. Find Map Station in room on the right.

■ Go up ramp and through Wave Beam door. Kill Bombu and scan the forcefield.

■ Scan red panel. Enter lab. Scan all research data, then Elevator hologram.

■ Go up walkway. Scan more data. Go to top of the room and scan the monitors.

■ In side room, Wave Beam hatch and jump up. Keep going towards Observatory.

■ Jump down and scan everything. Use the Slot to activate the one opposite.

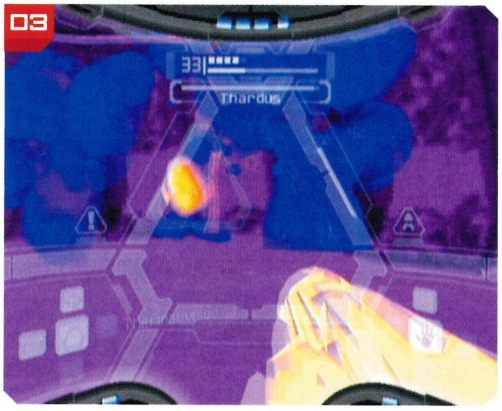
■ Activate second Slot to reveal Spinner Slots. Scan planets. Jump to the top.

■ At the top, use Save Station before jumping across to reach the Super Missiles.

KILL THARDUS

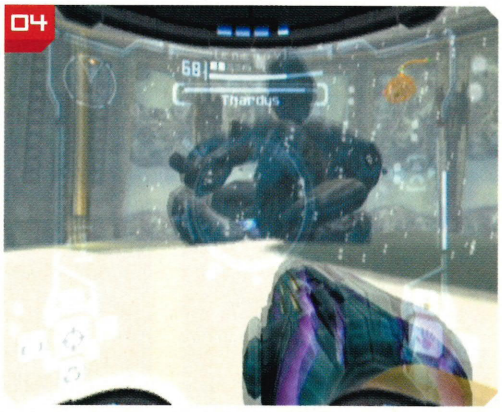
■ Head back to Observatory Save Station, then to Save Station near Ruined Courtyard. Go to unopened doorway.

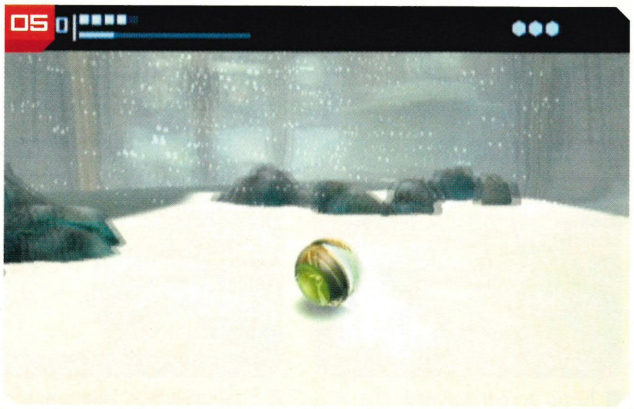
■ Use Thermal Visor to reveal Power Node. Shoot cover with Super Missiles, then panel with Wave Beam. Go through.



■ Morph Ball along North Tunnel to reach Quarantine Cave. Switch to Thermal Visor to target Thardus. Keep firing at target on him.

■ The Thermal Visor will overheat, so use Combat Visor. When Thardus fires rocks, shoot them. When you lose lock-on, use Thermal Visor again.





■ Repeat this pattern to wear Thardus down. When he rolls up into a ball, roll into a Morph Ball and boost out of his path. When the snowstorm starts, get in close and unleash Super Missiles.

GET THE WAVE BUSTER UPGRADE

01

■ Next stop is the Ruined Shrine, via Main Plaza. Head for half-pipe and boost to higher ledge. Ride the Spider track round and down tunnel.

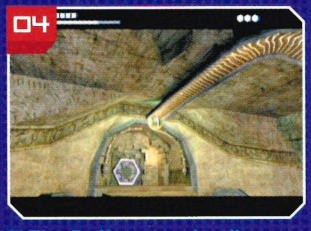
02

■ Go through the Wave Beam door to Light Access Tunnel. Make sure you've plenty of Missiles or you'll have to come back and start over.

03

■ Scan the pillars and shoot them with Super Missiles. Jump to next level and repeat until you reach the very top.

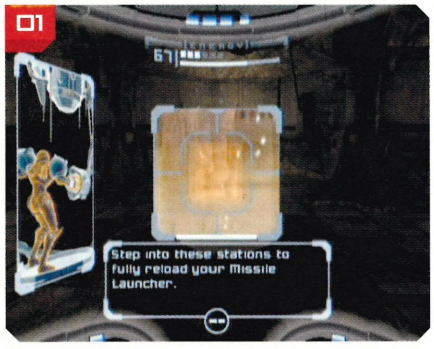
04



■ The Puffers are deadly, so take them out quickly. At the top platform you'll find the Wave Buster upgrade.

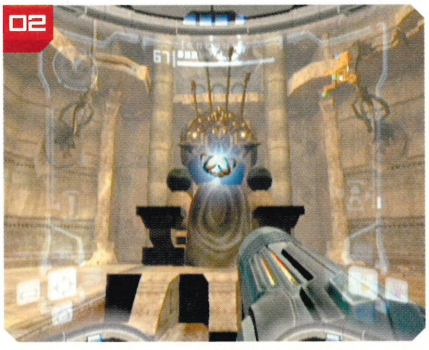
FIND THE ICE BEAM

01



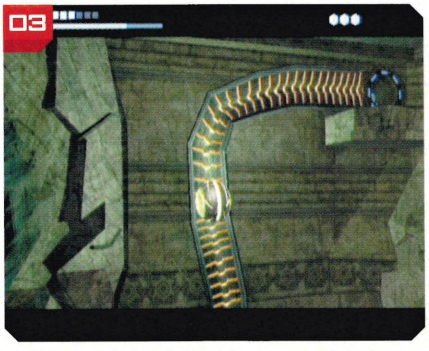
■ Go back to Crossway and through Elder Hall Access Tunnel. Go down the Morph Ball Tunnel on the left for more Missiles.

02



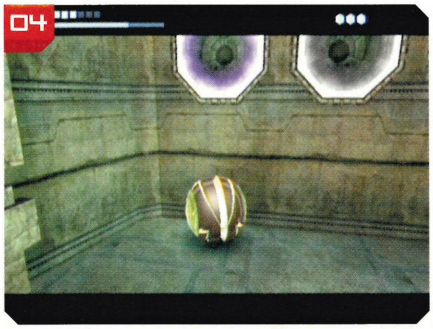
■ Drop into Hall of the Elders. Kill Ghost and scan Chozo Lore behind statue. Jump into statue's arms and use Morph Ball.

03



■ Ride Spider track and activate Morph Ball Slot. Three panels will appear. Go to the first doorway you used and jump right.

04



■ Wave Blast purple panel, jump in and let off a Bomb. Jump back onto statue. Roll along to the right, behind the forcefield.

05

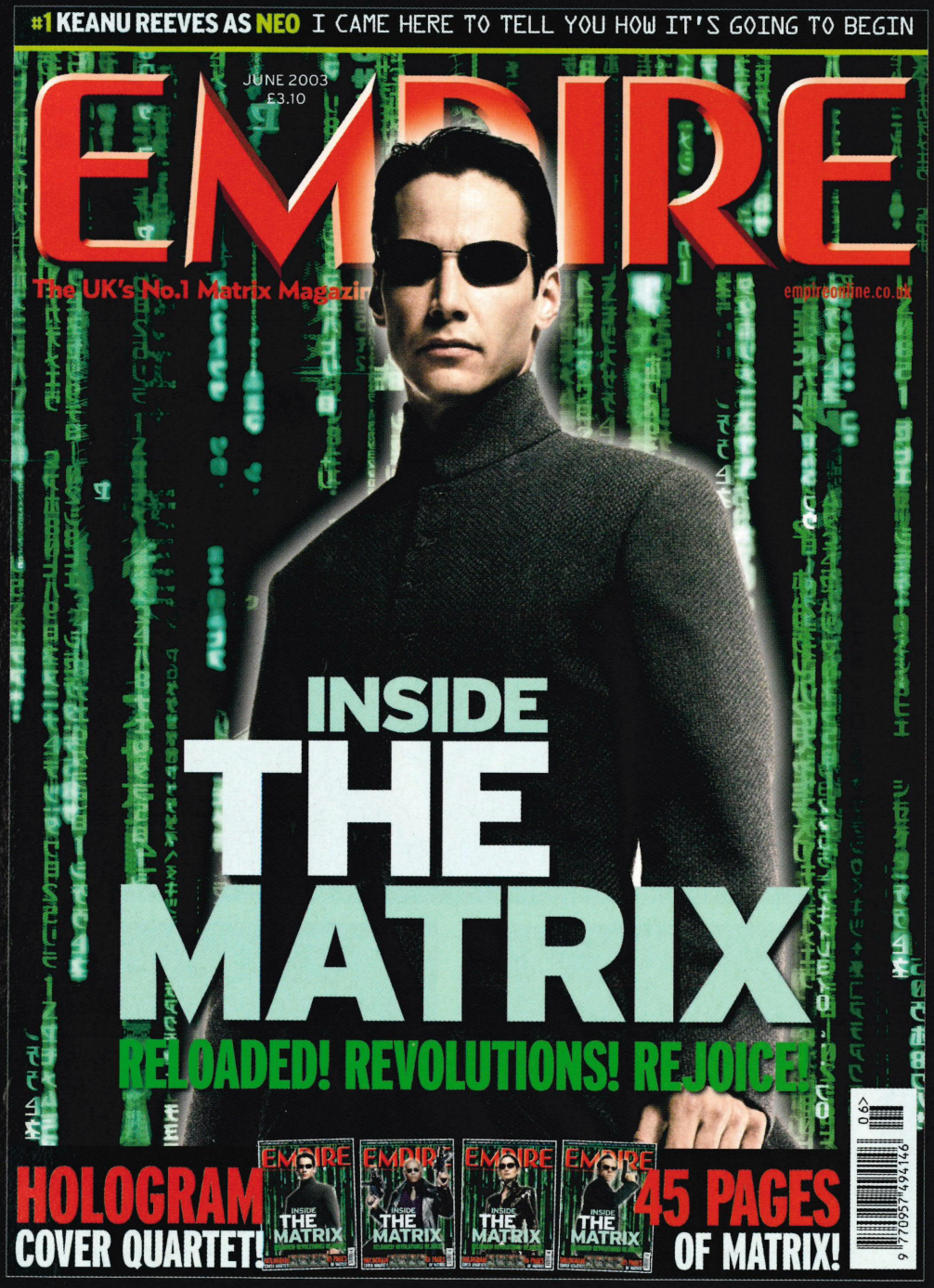
■ Scan switch to disable forcefield. Go through to Pool. Bomb hole in the bottom. When water drains, boost to higher ledge.

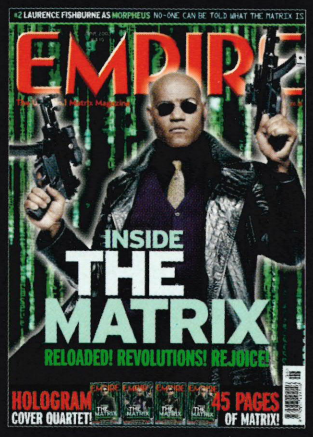
06

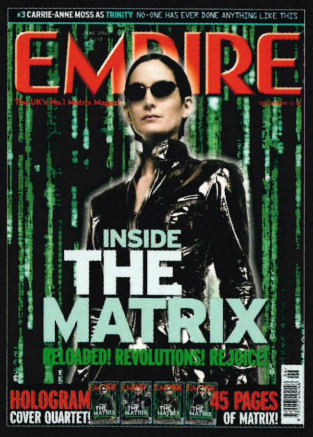
■ Find Save Station behind the blast shield door. Head for other side of Pool. Go through to get the Ice Beam weapon.

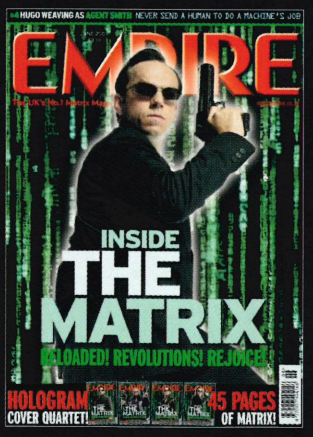
THE MATRIX RELOADED

only in









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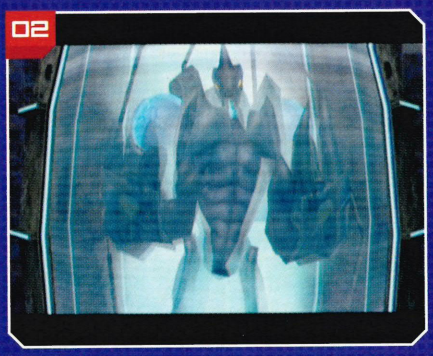
LOCATE THE POWER BOMBS

01

■ Enter Transport Tunnel E. Travel to Phazon Mines East. Enter the Main Quarry. Go up Spider track to Save Station.

02



■ Scan forcefield and two switches either side of Quarry. Enter Security Access A. Now head to the Mine Security Station.

03

■ Scan blue forcefield. Walk around U-shaped corridor and up ramp. Use your Wave Beam to kill the Wave Pirates.

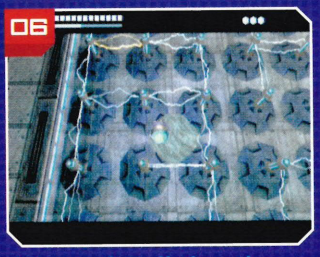
04

■ When unlocked, head for Wave Beam hatch at the end. Jump through. Blast along the boarded-up corridors and then through the Ice Beam hatch.

05

■ In Elite Research scan all information desks and frozen Pirate. Charge up Ice Beam to freeze any Ice Pirates and shatter them with Missiles.

06



■ Once active, climb up the platforms. Scan consoles to activate platforms. At the top, you'll meet a Power Pirate – Charge and Super Missile him.

07

■ Use Spinner to aim at left wall. Scan desk to activate laser and blast wall for Missile Expansion. Point laser straight ahead. Scan desk again.

08

■ Go to Research Access and use Spider Track to reach Ore Processing. Scan hologram at the bottom. Access the Morph Ball Slot and drop one Bomb.

09

■ Roll up blue Spider Track to next console and drop Bombs inside Slot. Go back to ground floor. Drop Bombs in Slot. Take red Spider Track to top.

10

■ Go through Ice Beam door to Elevator Access A. Take out the Bombus before using Spider Track. Enter door to find the Access to Mines Level 2.

11

■ Step into Elite Control Access and fight the Elite Pirate. Use Thermal Visor to hit the target on his back. Dodge and use Super Missiles.

12

■ Scan all other consoles, but watch out for a sneak attack. Head on up the ramp to the top where you'll meet more Pirates. Scan all consoles.

13

■ Enter Vent Shaft. When gas appears, go through Ice Beam door. Enter Omega Research. Scan consoles. You'll now face Wave and Power Pirates.

14

■ Drop into Central Dynamo. The cloaked drone can't be targeted, but it can be killed with one Wave Buster, not requiring a lock-on target.

15

■ Drop into Slot in floor and navigate the electrified maze. Drop Bombs in puddles to short-out power lines. Edge round. Grab Power Bombs.

FIND THE PLASMA BEAM

01

■ Head for the Geothermal Core. Jump up on the platform on the left side, closest to the South Tunnel. Use the Gravity Beam to reach the first round metal platform. Use the Spinner to raise the disc and lock it into place.

02

■ Jump to next platform and use Spinner. Keep jumping up until you reach the highest platform. Drop a Bomb in the Morph Ball Slot to activate the Spider Track maze. Roll along to reach Plasma Processing and get the Plasma Beam.

ELDER AND SPIRIT ARTEFACTS

01

■ Go to the room above the East Tower. Shoot crates and scan window. Melt ice with Plasma Beam, then shoot through window at the Fuel Cells with a Missile. Jump down and get the Artefact of Elder from the fallen tower.

02

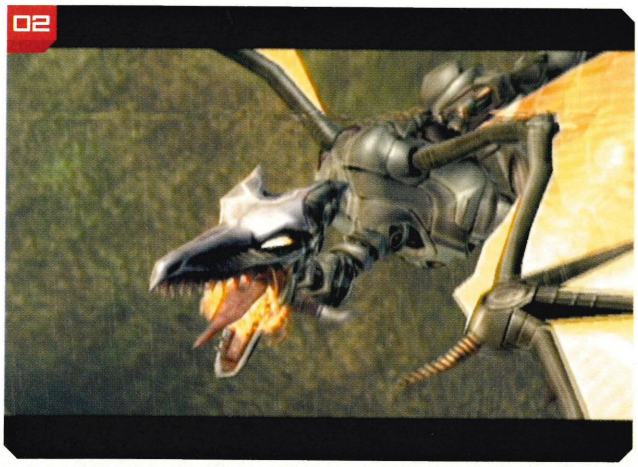
■ Go to Phendrana Edge. Make your way via the platforms and Grapple Beam Points to the top where you'll see a puddle of ice. Use X-Ray Visor and Power Bombs to expose a Plasma Beam door and get Artefact of Spirit.

DESTROY META RIDLEY

01

■ Now you have all 12 Artefacts, go back to your ship and save. Head for the Artefact Temple. Watch the stunning cut-scene.

02



■ When Meta Ridley starts firing, lock-on and use Super Missiles on his vulnerable chest. Repeat until he starts flying past, dropping bombs. Keep him targeted when he flies away.

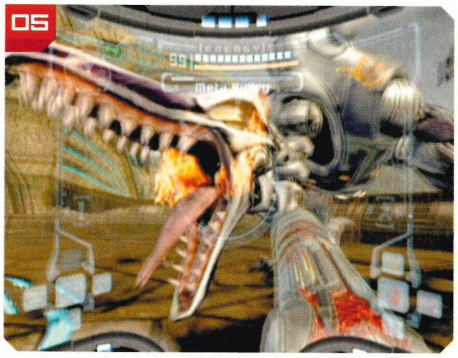
03

■ While he's flying, keep dodging – don't bother wasting Missiles. When he comes close and exposes a target, use more Super Missiles. For his final attack phase he'll land close to you.

04

■ Keep locked-on and dodge the flames. When he stops and exposes his wide-open mouth hit it with Super Missiles – if you still have any. You can use Charge weapons, too.

05

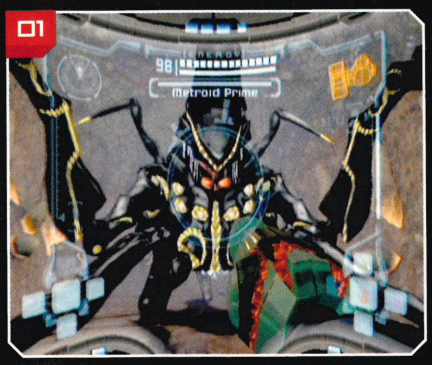


■ When he rears up in pain and exposes his chest, hit it again. Wave Buster works well here. Keep pounding away at his mouth and chest until he's dead. Step into the beam of blue light.

SPOILER WARNING

THE FINAL BATTLE

01



■ Use the Save Station inside the Crater Entry point. Go through the Plasma door to Crater Tunnel A. Keep going until you reach the Phazon Core. The Fission Metroids are a huge annoyance in here. When you shoot them they split in two.

02

■ Use beams on them, specific to their colours when they split, although Power Bombs work well, too. You'll have to do some very precise jumping all the way up to Crater Tunnel B. On your way up use a Missile Station.

03

■ Head along the Spider Tracks, then go through to face the ultimate boss, Metroid Prime. Boy, he's ugly! His target is very obvious though. Just aim for those tiny red eyes. Which Beam you use depends on his colour.

04

■ For example, when his markings change to red, use Plasma Beam. Use the tracks he makes to avoid his attacks by rolling into a Morph Ball. Stick to the Beam attacks and he'll crumble.

05

■ Metroid Prime Core is just as deadly. When you see it, keep dodging and avoid its attacks. None of your weapons will harm its big blue face. When it's gone, switch to either X-Ray or Thermal Visor.

06

■ Use one of the Visors to find Metroid close to pools of Phazon. Step into the Phazon to activate Hyper mode. This is when you can fire at Metroid and hurt it. Repeat and eventually you'll win.

THE FINAL VICTORY

■ Phew! That was hard work! Now rest your poor, battered fingers and watch as Samus makes her escape. Depending on how well you did you'll have unlocked some extra photo galleries, plus Hard mode. Are you ready to do it again?

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Almost perfect

8 HIGHLY RECOMMENDED	4 POOR
7 GOOD	3 DIRE
6 AVERAGE	2 DISASTROUS
5 COULD BE FLAWED	1 A DISGRACE

ATV2

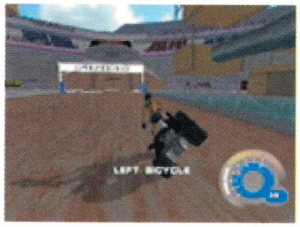
■ 1-2 Players ■ Issue 126
■ Memory / 27 Blocks

■ **Our Verdict** Bringing all of the mud and excitement of quad racing to GameCube, *ATV2* is all about getting dirty in Career, Freestyle and multiplayer modes. Talk about mud-flaps, this game's got 'em.

Price £39.99

8

www.acclaimuk.com



CONFLICT DESERT STORM

■ 1-4 Players ■ Issue 128
■ Memory / 8 Blocks

■ **Our Verdict** Recreate the 1990-91 Gulf War in your living room. You command a team of crack troops on a mission to spill as much blood as possible in this ultra-realistic war sim.

Price £39.99

8

www.conflict.com

BEACH SPIKERS

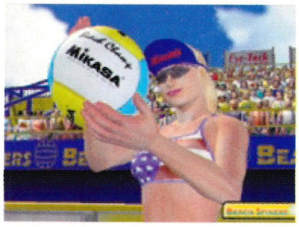
■ 1-4 Players ■ Issue 121
■ Memory / 3 Blocks

■ **Our Verdict** One of the finest multiplayer sports games to grace a GameCube, this beach volleyball game is easy to learn and stars lovely ladies in bikinis. One-player mode has its limitations, though.

Price £39.99

8

www.sega.com



DR. MUTO

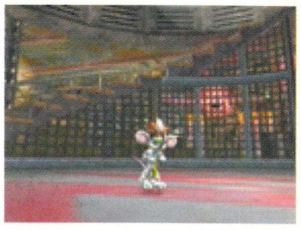
■ 1 Player ■ Issue 127
■ Memory / 3 Blocks

■ **Our Verdict** Smarter and more polished than most platformers, *Dr. Muto* is one to grab if you've finished *Super Mario Sunshine* and *Rayman 3*. The morphing powers add variety and there's plenty of humour, too.

Price £39.99

8

www.midway.com



BLOODY ROAR EXTREME

■ 1-2 Players ■ Issue 116
■ Memory / 3 Blocks

■ **Our Verdict** Mutant fighters go one-on-one in this beat-'em-up. Choose from 16 fighters who have the power to morph into a lion, rabbit and even a bat. A tough fighter with great replay value.

Price £39.99

8

www.activision.com

EGGO MANIA

■ 1-2 Players ■ Issue 121
■ Memory / 3 Blocks

■ **Our Verdict** Kind of like *Tetris* in reverse, this block-building game relies on addictive puzzle action as you try and beat your egg buddy to the rescue ship at the top of the screen. A good price, too.

Price £29.99

8

www.kemco-europe.com

BURNOUT

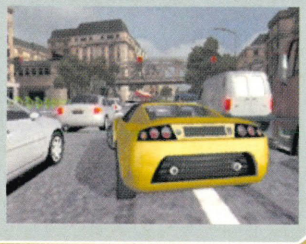
■ 1-2 Players ■ Issue 116
■ Memory / 4 Blocks

■ **Our Verdict** Acclaim's street racer is still a regular in the *NOM* office and with its mix of ramped-up arcade gameplay, pin-sharp graphics and incredible speed, you'll be burning out for months.

Price £39.99

9

www.acclaimuk.com



ETERNAL DARKNESS: SANITY'S REQUIEM

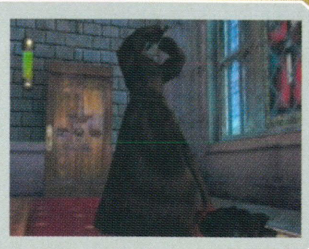
■ 1 Player ■ Issue 122
■ Memory / 8 Blocks

■ **Our Verdict** A truly unique and original game with a great script, cut-scenes and the innovative Sanity system, *Eternal Darkness* will leave you spooked, stumped and speechless.

Price £44.99

9

www.nintendo.co.uk



SEVEN HEAVEN

LOADS OF PEOPLE THINK A 7/10 RATING MEANS THAT A GAME ISN'T GOOD ENOUGH TO BUY – WELL THINK AGAIN, 'COS ALL OF THESE ARE GREAT IN THEIR OWN SPECIAL WAY...

ACE GOLF

■ 1-4 Players ■ Issue 123 ■ Memory / 5 Blocks
■ Price £39.99 ■ www.eidosinteractive.co.uk

■ **Our Verdict** This may have all the hallmarks of a cute and cuddly game, but the golf action offers more than enough of a challenge to satisfy even die-hard golfing fanatics. Get swinging!

7

BALDUR'S GATE: DARK ALLIANCE

■ 1-2 Players ■ Issue 128 ■ Memory / 30 Blocks
■ Price £39.99 ■ www.vugames.com

■ **Our Verdict** Despite having an expansive quest, plenty of spells, loads of enemies and a great two-player mode, *Baldur's Gate* loses a mark for its shoddy frame-rate and dumbed-down gameplay.

7

AGGRESSIVE INLINE

■ 1-2 Players ■ Issue 121 ■ Memory / 57 Blocks
■ Price £39.99 ■ www.acclaimuk.com

■ **Our Verdict** More extreme sports tomfoolery glides onto GameCube in this inline skating sim. It's worth a look for its original challenges and levels, but it nearly takes up a whole Memory Card 59!

7

BOMBERMAN GENERATIONS

■ 1-4 Players ■ Issue 123 ■ Memory / 3 Blocks
■ Price £39.99 ■ www.vugames.com

■ **Our Verdict** The one-player adventure is slow paced and badly designed, but if you're a fan of the *Bomberman* series this instalment is worth picking up for the frantic multiplayer mode alone.

7

EXTREME G-3

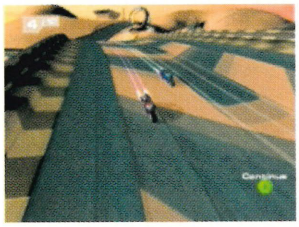
■ 1-4 Players ■ Issue 117
■ Memory / 3 Blocks

Price £39.99

8

■ **Our Verdict** Putting the series back on track, the third instalment has a wicked turn of speed and some mental tracks. With no slowdown in multiplayer, speed freaks would be wise to take a look.

www.acclaimuk.com



ISS 2

■ 1-4 Players ■ Issue 116
■ Memory / 5 Blocks

Price £39.99

8

■ **Our Verdict** Once a firm football favourite at *NOM*, *ISS 2* is dead easy to pick up and looks better than ever. Shooting is very sensitive and you'll have to build up your play to get an opening.

www.konami-europe.com

FIFA 2003

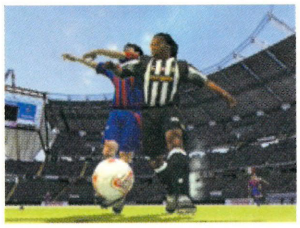
■ 1-4 Players ■ Issue 122
■ Memory / 52 Blocks

Price £39.99

8

■ **Our Verdict** After the awful *2002 FIFA World Cup*, we were expecting the worst, but *FIFA 2003* is anything but relegation material. Great graphics and playability make this the best footie game on GameCube.

www.uk.ea.com



JAMES BOND 007 NIGHTFIRE

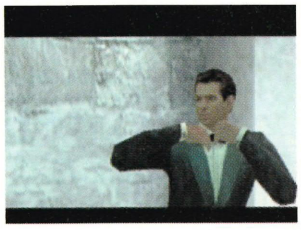
■ 1-4 Players ■ Issue 124
■ Memory / 2 Blocks

Price £44.99

8

■ **Our Verdict** James Bond's second GameCube outing is rip-roaring stuff and only misses out on a TNT Must Buy award due to a disappointing multiplayer option and a lack of *Bond* humour.

www.uk.ea.com



GODZILLA DAMM

■ 1-4 Players ■ Issue 125
■ Memory / 2 Blocks

Price £39.99

8

■ **Our Verdict** One of the best beat-'em-ups on GameCube. *Godzilla* is packed to the irradiated gills with behemoth B-Movie violence and features all your favourites from the movie series.

www.godzilladamm.com

THE LEGEND OF ZELDA: THE WIND WAKER

■ 1 Player ■ Issue 128
■ Memory / 12 Blocks

Price £39.99

10

■ **Our Verdict** The best reason to own a GameCube. *The Wind Waker* has it all: an absorbing quest, fun mini-games and it looks and sounds like nothing that's gone before. A bona fide classic.

www.nintendo.co.uk

IKARUGA

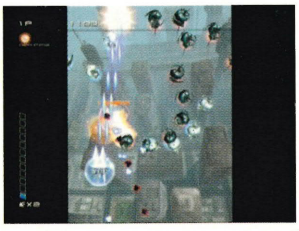
■ 1-2 Players ■ Issue 128
■ Memory / 4 Blocks

Price £39.99

8

■ **Our Verdict** An old-skool blaster with 21st Century polish, *Ikaruga* is all about dishing out hot-plasma. You'll need split-second reactions to progress, but dedicated players will flock to this. A real skills tester.

www.ikaruga-atari.net



CAPCOM VS. SNK 2 EO

■ 1-2 Players ■ Issue 120 ■ Memory / 2 Blocks
■ Price £39.99 ■ www.capcom.com

7

■ **Our Verdict** Those with fond memories of the golden days of 2D fighting will lap this up, but more fickle modern gamers may find a powerful yearning for a third dimension in which to kick ass.

F1 2002

■ 1-4 Players ■ Issue 123 ■ Memory / 5 Blocks
■ Price £39.99 ■ www.uk.ea.com

7

■ **Our Verdict** Coulthard and Co. bring the F1 world to life, giving race fans an authentic-looking game. Those less patient will hate the load times and cars that tend to spin and get damaged far too easily.

DIE HARD VENDETTA

■ 1 Player ■ Issue 123 ■ Memory / 6 Blocks
■ Price £39.99 ■ www.foxinteractive.com

7

■ **Our Verdict** This is a clever blend of action and stealth with an involving story line. But the lack of a multiplayer option is annoying and the bad language and violence mean it's not one for kids.

HARRY POTTER AND THE CHAMBER OF SECRETS

■ 1 Player ■ Issue 124 ■ Memory / 4 Blocks
■ Price £44.99 ■ www.harrypotter.ea.com

7

■ **Our Verdict** If you're in love with all things *Potter*, *The Chamber of Secrets* will have you spellbound – for a while. Harry's second adventure also has some of the finest visuals on GameCube.

FREEKSTYLE

■ 1-4 Players ■ Issue 121 ■ Memory / 2 Blocks
■ Price £39.99 ■ www.uk.ea.com

7

■ **Our Verdict** From the studio behind *SSX Tricky* comes this dirt bike trick fest. There's a huge array of bikes and riders, and the track designs make this exceptional, but it's also a very unforgiving ride.

JAMES BOND 007 IN... AGENT UNDER FIRE

■ 1-4 Players ■ Issue 118 ■ Memory / 3 Blocks
■ Price £44.99 ■ www.uk.ea.com

7

■ **Our Verdict** It's not quite as classy as *GoldenEye 007* and it doesn't offer much challenge to veterans, but it stays true to the *Bond* name and the mix of driving and shooting makes it well worth a look.

TNT: GOLD - 10/10
Gaming perfection

TNT: MUST BUY - 9/10
Almost perfect

8 HIGHLY RECOMMENDED	4 POOR
7 GOOD	3 DIRE
6 AVERAGE	2 DISASTROUS
5 COULD BE FLAWED	1 A DISGRACE

LUIGI'S MANSION

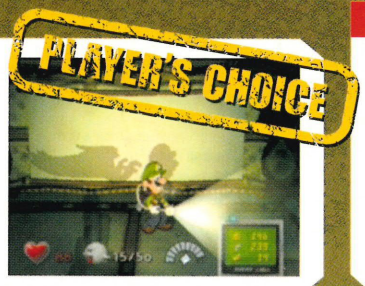
■ 1 Player ■ Issue 116
■ Memory / 3 Blocks

■ **Our Verdict** Mario's younger, lankier brother steals the limelight in a game that shows you exactly what GameCube can do. Catch ghosts and save Mazza in a classic that's a little too short for some.

Price £19.99

8

www.nintendo.co.uk



MEDAL OF HONOR FRONTLINE

■ 1-4 Players ■ Issue 123
■ Memory / 4 Blocks

■ **Our Verdict** An excellent and atmospheric attempt at bringing the horror of WWII to GameCube, *Medal of Honor Frontline* is only let down by its hit-and-miss aiming, which might frustrate you at times.

Price £44.99

8

www.uk.ea.com

MADDEN NFL 2003

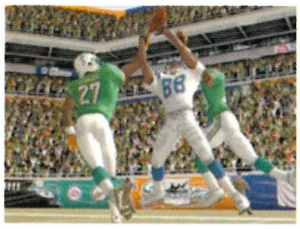
■ 1-2 Players ■ Issue 121
■ Memory / 59 Blocks

■ **Our Verdict** American football won't suit everyone, but if you're a fan this is one of the best *Madden* titles in ages. Exciting mini-games and a 30-season Franchise mode make it Superbowl material.

Price £39.99

8

www.uk.ea.com



METROID PRIME

■ 1 Player ■ Issue 127
■ Memory / 1 Block

■ **Our Verdict** Samus rolls onto GameCube and into one of the finest games of all time. Oozing class right from the outset, the quality doesn't slip one iota and it'll take you at least 40 hours to finish. Class.

Price £39.99

10

www.nintendo.co.uk

MARIO PARTY 4

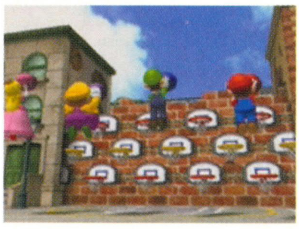
■ 1-4 Players ■ Issue 123
■ Memory / 2 Blocks

■ **Our Verdict** All your favourite Nintendo characters put in an appearance in this wacky and competitive title, making *Mario Party 4* one of the most appealing titles on GameCube.

Price £39.99

8

www.nintendo.co.uk



MAT HOFFMAN'S PRO BMX 2

■ 1-8 Players ■ Issue 123
■ Memory / 18 Blocks

■ **Our Verdict** *Pro BMX 2* is a solid title and well worth the purchase, but it's neither as polished, nor as innovative as *Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 4*. Extreme sports fans will like it, but not as much as *Tony*.

Price £39.99

8

www.activision02.com

NBA COURTSIDE 2002

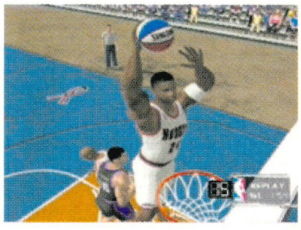
■ 1-4 Players ■ Issue 117
■ Memory / 7 Blocks

■ **Our Verdict** It may not be every GameCube owner's sport of choice, but this basketball sim features incredible A.I. and a mint passing system. It's just a shame that only fans of the sport need apply.

Price £39.99

8

www.nintendo.co.uk



LOTR: THE TWO TOWERS

■ 1 Player ■ Issue 127 ■ Memory / 4 Blocks
■ Price £39.99 ■ www.uk.ea.com

■ **Our Verdict** Mixing hack-'em-up hokum with movie polish, EA has brought the first two films to life with stunning FMV and massive rucks – but it's too linear, too short and too hard on your thumbs.

7

NFL 2K3

■ 1-4 Players ■ Issue 127 ■ Memory / 56 Blocks
■ Price £39.99 ■ www.sega.com

■ **Our Verdict** Despite lacking the tutorials, depth and mini-games of *Madden*, this is a solid title with great presentation, detail and bone-jarring action. However, new comers may find it daunting.

7

LOST KINGDOMS

■ 1-2 Players ■ Issue 119 ■ Memory / 2 Blocks
■ Price £39.99 ■ www.activision.com

■ **Our Verdict** Formally known as *Rune* in Japan, this exclusive GameCube RPG will leave you obsessively collecting cards for some great monster battles. Worth a look but *LKII* is better.

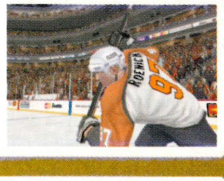
7

NHL 2K3

■ 1-2 Players ■ Issue 128 ■ Memory / 104 Blocks
■ Price £39.99 ■ www.sega.com

■ **Our Verdict** Sega's highly polished bandwagon rolls on, providing the usual high-class presentation and detail. But as usual, it's lacking that certain something reserved for truly great sports games.

7



NBA 2K3

■ 1-4 Players ■ Issue 127 ■ Memory / 52 Blocks
■ Price £39.99 ■ www.sega.com

■ **Our Verdict** *NBA 2K3* features great graphics, presentation and a full roster of teams and modes, but it's not as playable as *NBA Courtside* and you'll plod along while the opposition run rings around you.

7

NHL HITZ 20-03

■ 1-4 Players ■ Issue 122 ■ Memory / 8 Blocks
■ Price £39.99 ■ www.midway.com

■ **Our Verdict** Emerging just six months after its predecessor, *NHL Hitz 20-03* is not much more than a solid evolution of *NHL Hitz 20-02*. Don't expect much more than a fun-for-a-while arcade game.

7

MORTAL KOMBAT: DEADLY ALLIANCE

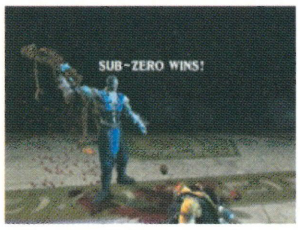
■ 1-2 Players ■ Issue 125
■ Memory / 1 Block

Price £39.99

8

■ **Our Verdict** *Mortal Kombat* is back to its bloody best in this gruesome gore-fest. New fighters and moves, slick graphics and over 600 secrets to unlock make this a dream for *MK* fans.

www.midway.com



RED CARD

■ 1-2 Players ■ Issue 119
■ Memory / 12 Blocks

Price £39.99

8

■ **Our Verdict** Just what *NHL Hitz* is to ice hockey, *Red Card* is to football. Crunching tackles and fast-flowing action make this a change to the usual realism of *FIFA* and *ISS 2*. Great two-player mode, too.

www.midway.com

PHANTASY STAR ONLINE EPISODE I&II

■ 1-4 Players ■ Issue 127
■ Memory / 28 Blocks

Price £39.99

8

■ **Our Verdict** The single-player and split-screen games are limited, but the online quest is a dream – if you can afford it. There's a real sense of community as you join in the quest with worldwide gamers.

www.sega.com

RESIDENT EVIL

■ 1 Player ■ Issue 120
■ Memory / 8 Blocks

Price £44.99

8

■ **Our Verdict** Amazing to look at and packed with skin-crawling scares to make grown-ups scream and wet themselves, *Resident Evil* is one of the top horror games to buy for your GameCube.

www.capcom.com

PIKMIN

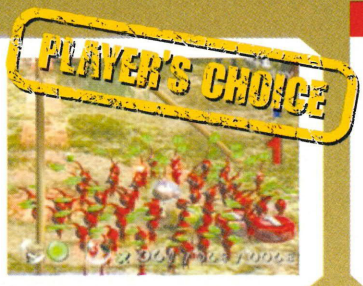
■ 1 Player ■ Issue 118
■ Memory / 4 Blocks

Price £19.99

8

■ **Our Verdict** Shigeru Miyamoto has done it again with a puzzle-solving strategy game featuring cuddly Pikmin. Totally mad, but a gem to play, *Pikmin* misses a top score as it's just too short.

www.nintendo.co.uk



RESIDENT EVIL ZERO

■ 1 Player ■ Issue 126
■ Memory / 9 Blocks

Price £39.99

8

■ **Our Verdict** A spine-chilling visual treat, *Zero* has all the ingredients of a top survival horror game, but it's let down by that clunky control system. However, *Resi* fans will still love it to bits.

www.capcom.com

RAYMAN 3: HOODLUM HAVOC

■ 1-4 Players (with GBA) ■ Issue 126
■ Memory / 8 Blocks

Price £39.99

9

■ **Our Verdict** France's top platform-hopping hero makes his GameCube debut in an adventure that's fun and freaky. With top-class graphics and sound, and innovative GBA connectivity this is essential.

www.rayman3.com/uk

ROCKY

■ 1-16 Players ■ Issue 123
■ Memory / 2 Blocks

Price £39.99

9

■ **Our Verdict** *Rocky* is *the* boxing game on GameCube. Guide droopy-eyed Sly through the epic punch-ups featured in the five movies, fighting Apollo Creed, Clubber Lang and Ivan Drago along the way.

www.rockythegame.com

OUTLAW GOLF

■ 1-4 Players ■ Issue 128 ■ Memory / 5 Blocks
■ Price £39.99 ■ www.tdk-mediactive.com

7

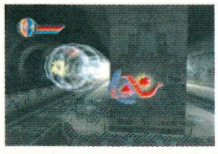
■ **Our Verdict** It's not as classy as *Tiger Woods*, but *Outlaw Golf* has a trick up its sleeve, kicking the usual stuffiness out of the sport and replacing it with half-naked vixens and the chance to duff up your caddie.

SPIDER-MAN

■ 1 Player ■ Issue 118 ■ Memory / 2 Blocks
■ Price £39.99 ■ www.activision.com

7

■ **Our Verdict** The awesome film turns out to be a less-than-awesome game thanks to iffy controls and poor camera angles that make it difficult to play. Still, there's a variety of levels and some top bosses.



PAC-MAN WORLD 2

■ 1 Player ■ Issue 126 ■ Memory / 16 Blocks
■ Price £39.99 ■ www.pacmanworld2.com

7

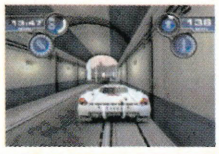
■ **Our Verdict** Simple games are sometimes the best and *Pac-Man World 2* proves this with a basic-but-addictive challenge. You'll be driven to get a 100 per cent rating and unlock classic *Pac-Man* games.

SPYHUNTER

■ 1-4 Players ■ Issue 117 ■ Memory / 2 Blocks
■ Price £39.99 ■ www.midway.com

7

■ **Our Verdict** The name may be 20 years old, but this fast-paced blaster is still fun. Graphically, it would have looked at home on the N64, but the weapons are superb and the two-player is a cracker.



RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP

■ 1-4 Players ■ Issue 126 ■ Memory / 6 Blocks
■ Price £29.99 ■ www.sci.co.uk

7

■ **Our Verdict** With an emphasis on simulation, this was never going to be an easy ride, but stick with it and you'll be in for a thrilling drive. The bargain price is great, but this is one for serious race fans only.

SSX TRICKY

■ 1-2 Players ■ Issue 118 ■ Memory / 5 Blocks
■ Price £39.99 ■ www.uk.ea.com

7

■ **Our Verdict** EA BIG gets its first taste of GameCube in a massive snowboard sim that's full of mad tricks. But it does suffer slowdown at busy times and later courses are too cluttered.

TNT: GOLD - 10/10
Gaming perfection

TNT: MUST BUY - 9/10
Almost perfect

8 HIGHLY RECOMMENDED	4 POOR
7 GOOD	3 DIRE
6 AVERAGE	2 DISASTROUS
5 COULD BE FLAWED	1 A DISGRACE

SEGA SOCCER SLAM

■ 1-4 Players ■ Issue 122
■ Memory / 5 Blocks

Price £39.99

8

■ **Our Verdict** They call it soccer, we call it football, but *Sega Soccer Slam* is something completely new. And that makes it a breath of fresh air, with an emphasis on gruesome tackles and mate-bashing fun.

www.sega.com

STAR WARS JEDI KNIGHT II: JEDI OUTCAST

■ 1-2 Players ■ Issue 123
■ Memory / 3 Blocks

Price £39.99

8

■ **Our Verdict** Battle your way from one side of the galaxy to the other, solving puzzles, blasting Imperial scum and using mind-tricking, throat-crushing Force powers along the way. Great stuff!

www.lucasarts.com

SMUGGLER'S RUN: WARZONES

■ 1-4 Players ■ Issue 122
■ Memory / 6 Blocks

Price £39.99

8

■ **Our Verdict** There's nothing else like *Smuggler's Run: Warzones* on GameCube, and while the one-player mode might be a little slow and repetitive, the multiplayer game is a total riot.

www.rockstargames.com

SUPER MARIO SUNSHINE

■ 1 Player ■ Issue 121
■ Memory / 7 Blocks

Price £39.99

9

■ **Our Verdict** One of video games' greatest icons returns in Shigeru Miyamoto's masterpiece. Lead Mario across Isle Delfino, clearing up the island's graffiti with his FLUDD contraption.

www.nintendo.co.uk

SONIC MEGA COLLECTION

■ 1-2 Players ■ Issue 127
■ Memory / 2 Blocks

Price £39.99

8

■ **Our Verdict** Retro-heads and small-mammal fans rejoice – Sonic's greatest 16-bit adventures are here. The games are still fun, but a couple of bad apples stop this from being a Must Buy title.

www.sega.com

SUPER MONKEY BALL

■ 1-4 Players ■ Issue 116
■ Memory / 3 Blocks

Price £39.99

9

■ **Our Verdict** Highly original and packed with arcade fun. Sega's heroes are a blast. Simple to play and nectar in multiplayer, you'll be at it for ages. You'll need the skills of a ninja for one-player, too.

www.sega.com

STAR FOX ADVENTURES

■ 1 Player ■ Issue 123
■ Memory / 3 Blocks

Price £44.99

8

■ **Our Verdict** He took his time, but now Fox is back and fighting evil on Dinosaur Planet, sweeping you along with his beautiful and mesmerising quest. The only trouble is it's not long enough.

www.nintendo.co.uk

SUPER MONKEY BALL 2

■ 1-4 Players ■ Issue 126
■ Memory / 2 Blocks

Price £39.99

8

■ **Our Verdict** Get set for more monkey magic in that rarest of all titles, a sequel that comes close to the original. Despite some levels that are based more on luck than judgement, *SMB 2* is still fur-bulous.

www.sega.com

STAR WARS BOUNTY HUNTER

■ 1 Player ■ Issue 125 ■ Memory / 2 Blocks
■ Price £39.99 ■ www.lucasarts.com

7

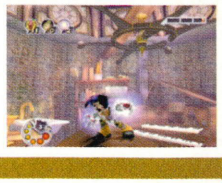
■ **Our Verdict** Yet another *Star Wars* title hits GameCube, this time following the galaxy's greatest bounty hunter, *Episode II*'s Jango Fett. This game is full of jetpack fun and gun-toting action.

VEXX

■ 1 Player ■ Issue 128 ■ Memory / 2 Blocks
■ Price £39.99 ■ www.vexxthegame.com

7

■ **Our Verdict** On a mission of vengeance, Vexx must use his head as well as his gauntlets to get by in this above-average platform romp. It's just a shame that the appaling camera spoils the fun.



STAR WARS THE CLONE WARS

■ 1-4 Players ■ Issue 123 ■ Memory / 3 Blocks
■ Price £39.99 ■ www.lucasarts.com

7

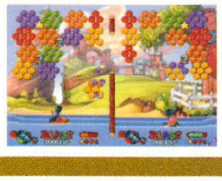
■ **Our Verdict** What first appears to be a mindless blaster, soon turns into an absorbing shooter with bonus objectives and lasting appeal – basically a slightly inferior version of *Rogue Squadron II*.

WORMS BLAST

■ 1-2 Players ■ Issue 117 ■ Memory / 3 Blocks
■ Price £39.99 ■ www.team17.com

7

■ **Our Verdict** Those crazy Worms star in a brain-mashing puzzler that's easy on the eye, but a beast to perfect. Taking the best from games like *Bust-A-Move*, 60 puzzles await and the later ones are nasty.



SUMMONER: A GODDESS REBORN

■ 1 Player ■ Issue 127 ■ Memory / 19 Blocks
■ Price £39.99 ■ www.thq.com

7

■ **Our Verdict** With over 30 hours of absorbing gameplay, *Summoner* should satisfy all you RPG fans for a bit. But dull combat and bland locations mean that it'll never be a swords and sorcery classic.

ZOOCUBE

■ 1-4 Players ■ Issue 120 ■ Memory / 2 Blocks
■ Price £39.99 ■ www.acclaimuk.com

7

■ **Our Verdict** At just under £40 there isn't enough variety at this price and it would have looked at home on the N64. Saying that, *ZooCube*'s simple enough to pick up and it isn't just another sequel.

SUPER SMASH BROS. MELEE

■ 1-4 Players ■ Issue 117
■ Memory / 3 Blocks

Price £19.99

8

■ **Our Verdict** The sequel to the N64 best seller, this fighter sees you battling an all-star cast from classic Nintendo games across some great locations including *F-Zero*'s Mute City and *Zelda*'s Termina. Superb!

www.nintendo.co.uk

TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 3

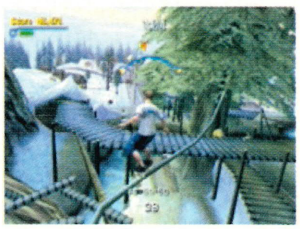
■ 1-2 Players ■ Issue 116
■ Memory / 6-8 Blocks

Price £39.99

8

■ **Our Verdict** The first GameCube *Tony Hawk* game is a totally awesome extreme sports titles that's addictive and very hard to master. It'll keep you coming back for just one more go.

www.activision02.com



TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR 2003

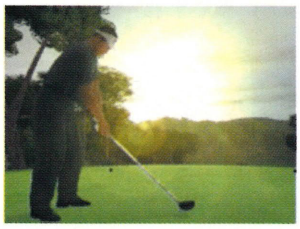
■ 1-4 Players ■ Issue 124
■ Memory / 32 Blocks

Price £39.99

8

■ **Our Verdict** The best golf game on GameCube, this misses out on greatness due to the lack of a comprehensive Tour mode. But the graphics are stunning and the control system is top-class.

www.uk.ea.com



TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 4

■ 1-2 Players ■ Issue 123
■ Memory / 7 Blocks

Price £39.99

9

■ **Our Verdict** *Tony 4* takes all that's great about the series and adds more freedom, tricks and fun. With so many challenges and mini-games you'll still be playing this when *Tony 5* turns up.

www.activision02.com

TIMESPLITTERS 2

■ 1-4 Players ■ Issue 122
■ Memory / 2 Blocks

Price £44.99

9

■ **Our Verdict** Travel through time and space, righting the wrongs perpetrated by those pesky TimeSplitters in this top First Person Shooter. The multiplayer is right up there with *GoldenEye 007*.

www.eidosinteractive.co.uk

WAVE RACE BLUE STORM

■ 1-4 Players ■ Issue 118
■ Memory / 12 Blocks

Price £39.99

8

■ **Our Verdict** No other title has water effects like those in *Blue Storm* and with highly tuned computer A.I., the single-player mode is very tough to beat. Give it a go, you won't be disappointed.

www.nintendo.co.uk

TNT WANNABEES

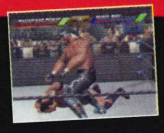
THEY ALL WANTED TO BE A NINTENDO LEGEND, BUT THEY DIDN'T QUITE MAKE IT

Driving/Racing

- 18 Wheeler [117]
- Cel Damage [116]
- Crazy Taxi [116]
- Dakar 2 [128]
- Driven [116]
- Hot Wheels Velocity X [125]
- Micro Machines [126]
- Need For Speed Hot Pursuit 2 [122]
- Pro Rally [122]
- The Simpsons Road Rage [117]
- Wreckless: The Yakuza Missions [124]

Sports

- 2002 FIFA World Cup [118]
- Big Air Freestyle [123]
- BMX XXX [124]
- Dave Mirra Freestyle BMX 2 [116]
- Dark Summit [117]
- Disney Sports Football [123]
- Disney Sports Skateboarding [128]
- ESPN International Winter Sports 2002 [117]
- Evolution Snowboarding [127]
- Evolution Skateboarding [126]
- Jeremy McGrath Supercross World [118]
- Kelly Slater's Pro Surfer [121]
- Knockout Kings 2003 [123]
- Legends of Wrestling [117]
- Legends of Wrestling II [125]



- MX Superfly [121]
- NBA Live 2003 [123]
- NHL Hitz 20-02 [116]
- NHL 2003 [121]
- Pro Tennis WTA Tour [122]
- Rocket Power Beach Bandits [123]
- Top Angler Real Bass Fishing [128]
- Virtua Striker 3 Ver. 2002 [118]
- WWE Wrestlemania X8 [122]

Beat-'em-ups

- Barbarian [121]
- UFC Throwdown [121]
- X-Men Next Dimension [125]

Action adventure

- Batman Vengeance [116]
- Blood Omen 2 [125]
- Casper: Spirit Dimensions [126]
- Disney's Magical Mirror With Mickey Mouse [121]
- Doshin The Giant [122]
- Gauntlet Dark Legacy [121]
- Ghost Recon [127]
- Men in Black II: Alien Escape [127]
- Minority Report [125]
- Mystic Heroes [123]
- Reign of Fire [124]
- Robotech Battlecry [125]
- Scooby-Doo! Night of 100 Frights [123]

- Superman: Shadow of Apokolips [128]
- Universal Studios Theme Parks Adventure [116]

Platformers

- Crash Bandicoot [123]
- Disney's Tarzan Freeride [116]
- Donald Duck Quack Attack [117]
- Frogger Beyond [128]
- Shrek: Extra Large [126]
- Sonic Adventure 2 Battle [116]
- Spyro: Enter the Dragonfly [124]
- Taz Wanted [122]
- Ty The Tasmanian Tiger [123]

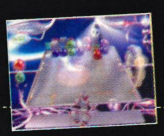
Shoot-'em-ups

- Defender [127]
- Fireblade [125]
- Top Gun Combat Zones [121]
- Turok Evolution [122]

Party games

- Sweet 16 Licensed to Drive [126]
- Monsters, Inc. Scream Arena [127]

Puzzle games



- Super Bubble Pop [127]
- Tetris Worlds [122]

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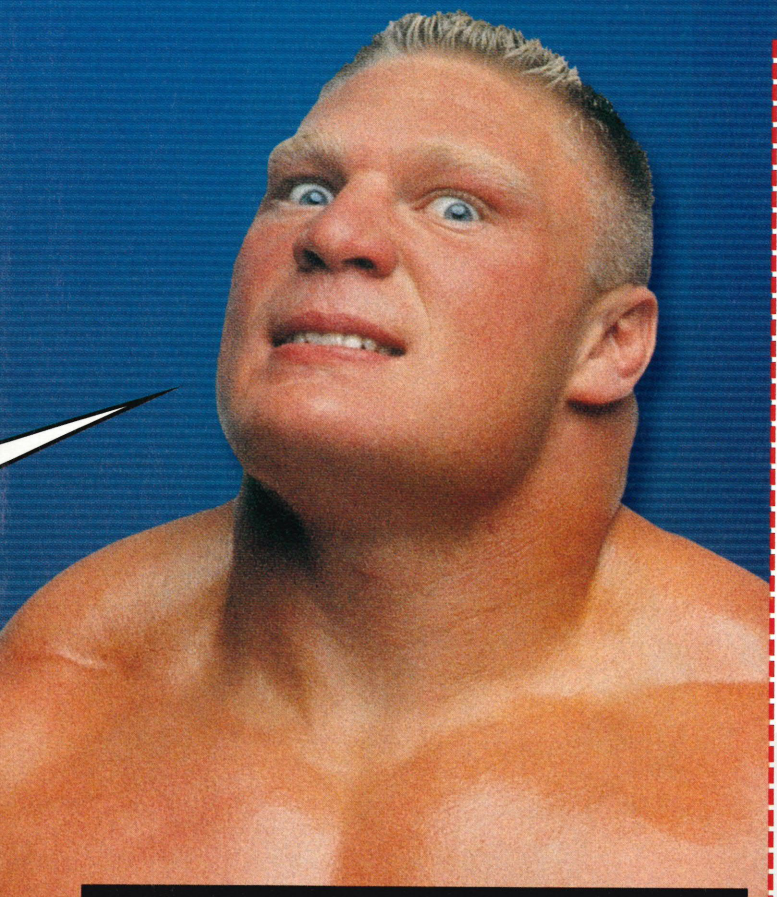

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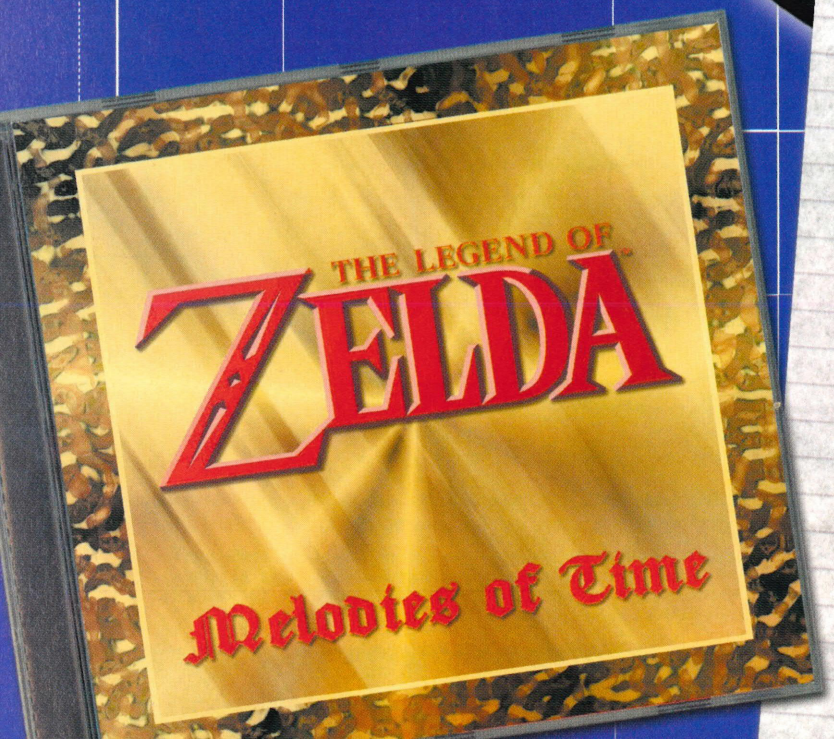

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DONKEY KONG COUNTRY

■ Release 1994 ■ By Rare

Donkey Kong may have started off as a girl-thieving ape and arch enemy of Mario, but he soon cleaned up his ways and became a Super NES hero.

Donkey Kong wakes up one day to find his banana stash has been stolen and his best buddy, Diddy Kong, kidnapped. He knows that King K. Rool is the perp, so he sets out to defeat the evil lizard and retrieve his crescent-shaped fruit. This simple story line sets the scene for one of the best 2D platformers of all time.

Apart from extremely simple controls and great level design, *Donkey Kong Country* is best remembered for its graphics and the small details that made the jungle seem alive, like the tiny insects flying around and the ambient sounds that echo as you play.

Each level is packed to the brim with secret areas and hidden bonuses. There were over 100 tough levels to struggle through and finding all the secrets was a long-but-satisfying haul. *Donkey Kong Country* was a truly fine game and a 16-bit technical breakthrough.

5 THINGS YOU MAY NOT KNOW

01 Go back to Donkey Kong's banana stash after finishing the game to find all his bananas.

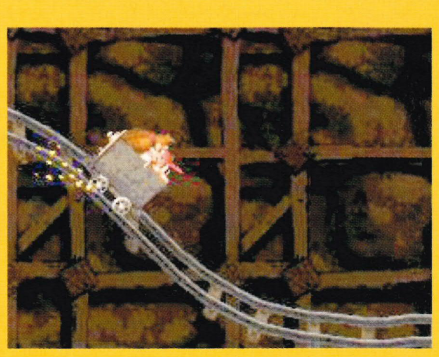
02 *DK*'s been around since 1981, but wasn't given to Rare as a project until the early 90s.

03 Many questioned why King K. Rool (a reptile) would want to steal bananas, but Rare stuck to their guns regardless.

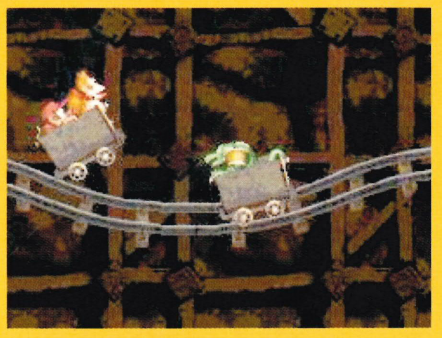
04 Cranky Kong, who appears in *Donkey Kong Country*, is actually the old Donkey Kong from the 80s in his retirement years.

05 The graphics system used to make *Donkey Kong Country* look so darn sweet is called ACM (Advance Computer Modelling).

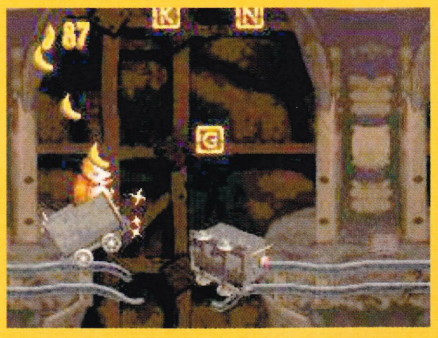
MINE CART MADNESS



» Seeing the cool mine cart levels for the first time stunned us. The cart rushes along as you jump to avoid obstacles.



» Free-wheeling downhill, the cart picks up serious speed as Kremlings rush towards the Kongs to stop them dead.



» As if things weren't tough enough, the ante is upped by gaps in the track and those all-important KONG letters.

» Oh yeah, Diddy you coward. Let Kong do all the hard work, then come back at the end to take all the credit. Dirty monkey!

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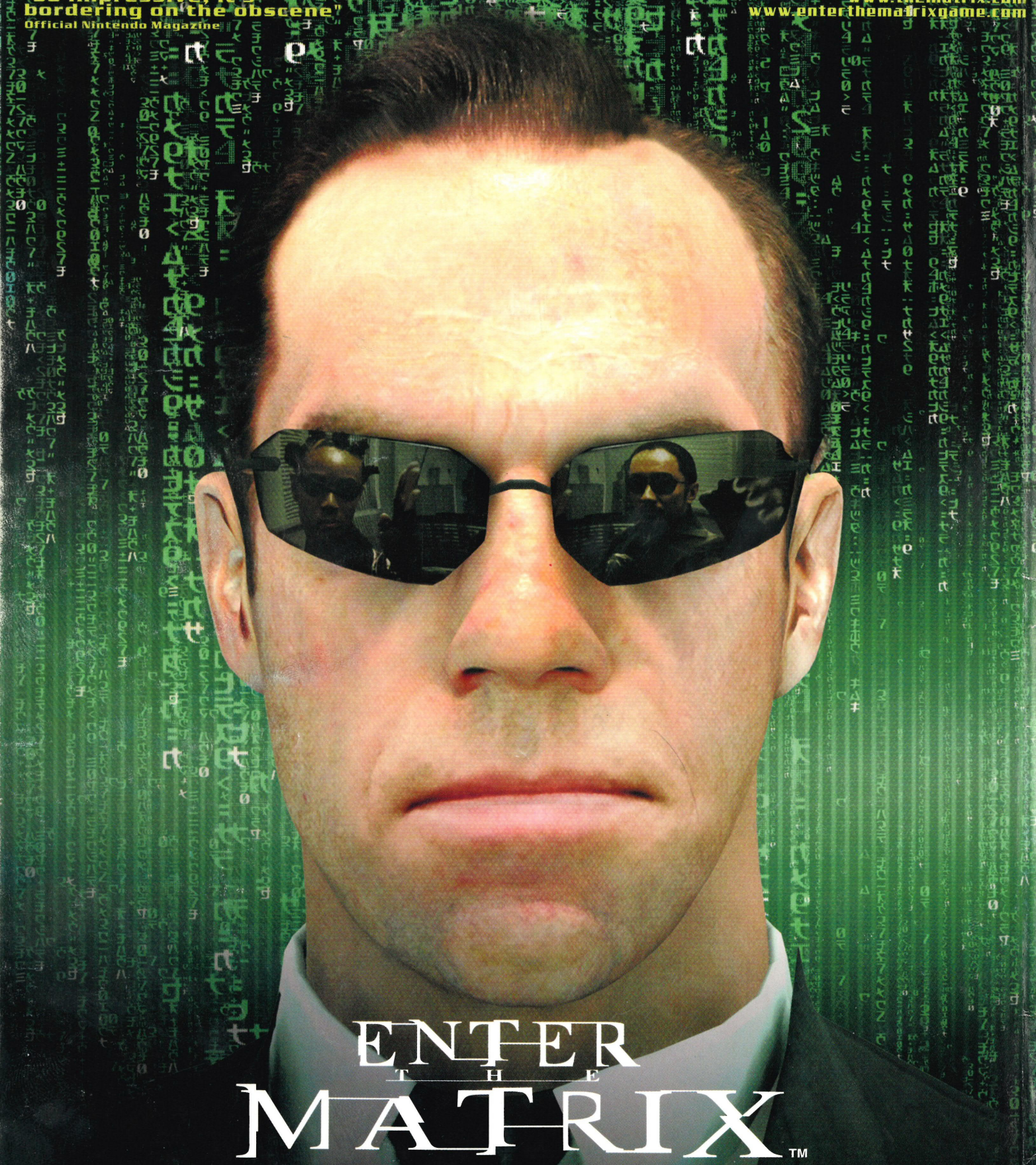

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